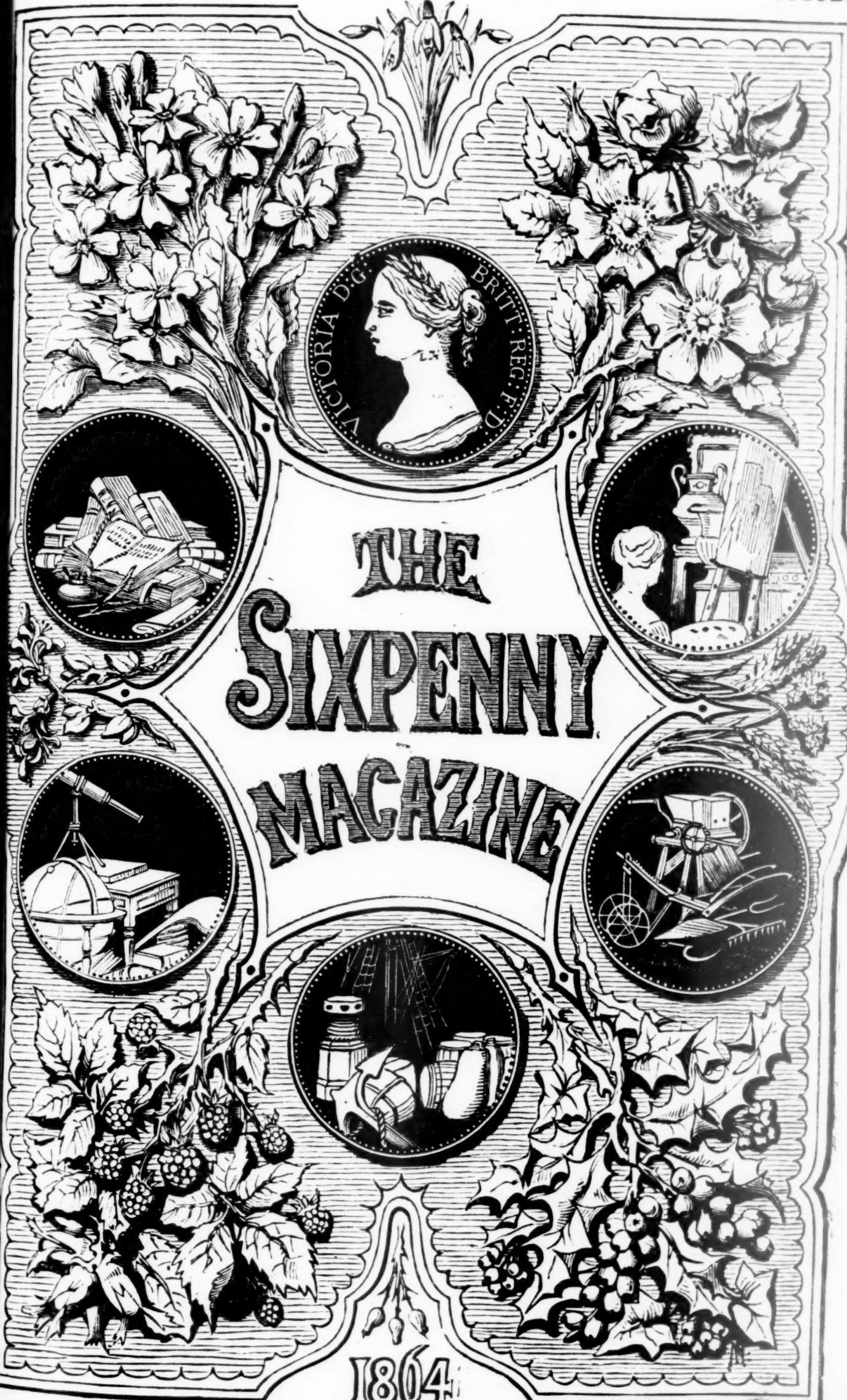


No. XL

PRICE SIXPENCE.

OCTOBER.

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THE
SIXPENNY
MAGAZINE

1864

LONDON: WARD AND LOCK, 158, FLEET STREET.

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THE
SIXPENNY MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 1, 1864.

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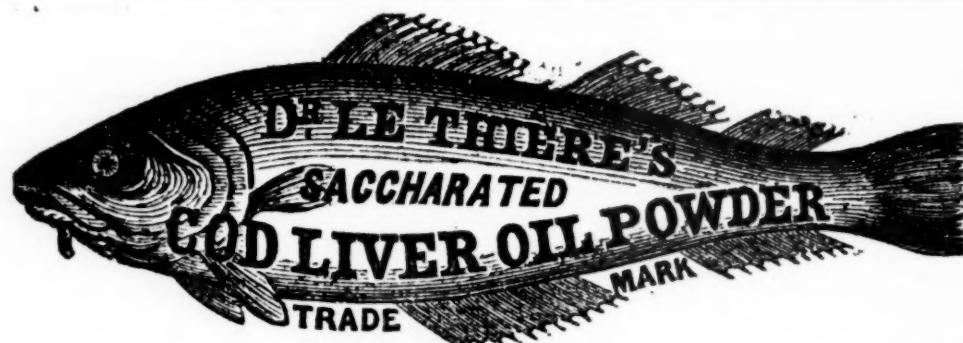
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SINGED MOTHS.

A CITY ROMANCE.

By C. J. COLLINS, Author of "Sackville Chase," "The Man in Chains," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE LITTLE OLD MAN VISITS TOWER HILL AGAIN, AND IS MORE MYSTERIOUS THAN EVER.

THE sudden death of the sheriff of course created a profound impression in the City, and an extraordinary meeting of the Common Council was convened immediately, in order that a special resolution might be passed, in which should be recorded for the especial behoof of all time the civic virtues of the deceased. The gentleman who proposed the resolution made a speech which was characterized by the imaginative eloquence which on such occasions is not only allowable but is expected. He said that the late Sir Robert Smugglefuss was equally known upon the mart, on Change, and upon the judgment-seat, and was respected everywhere. In a word, it might be truly said of him that he had nobly supported the dignity of the City, and was very wealthy. The gentleman who seconded the proposition endeavoured to outdo the mover thereof in panegyric, but he became so hopelessly involved in his historic reference to the glories of former sheriffs in the earlier ages of the City's history, that the Court became impatient, and he had to sit down rather abruptly, under that operation which, in the technical language commonly used at public meetings, is expressed by "cut it short." The little rotund lord mayor, before he put the question made a set speech on his own account, in which he dwelt upon the fact that he had enjoyed the splendid hospitality of the late sheriff in his own house, just before that splendid alliance which had made Europe ring with applause and satisfaction. This allusion was received with some deprecatory coughs by the aldermen near the lord mayor, as it was felt to be touching on very delicate ground after the recent disclosures that had been made at the Court down at Westminster. The little Right Hon. Tombola took the hint, and saw the blunder he had made, so he very adroitly addressed himself to the general qualities of the late sheriff as a City man. It was

well known that when any great subscription-list appeared in the public papers, the name of Sir Robert Smugglefuss was always conspicuous in it. As to his private charities it wasn't for him to speak. Nobody knew nothing about them, which was confined to the sheriff's own buzzum, where they must have been a pleasure unbounded. Indeed the lord mayor said he thought he might conscientiously say of the late sheriff, what he believed was once said of William the Conqueror, that in some things, take him for all in all, they needn't look upon his like again; a sentiment that was vehemently applauded by all the Court. The resolution was then put and carried, as the lord mayor announced, "unanimously, nem. con."

"That divorce business must have been a terrible blow to him, sir," said the Hunchback to the marine-store dealer on Tower Hill, as they were discussing the subject of the sudden demise of the late sheriff.

"To such a man it must have been a great blow indeed, Daniel, for it was like cutting away one half of his glory at one stroke," said the marine-store dealer.

"I wonder how his property has been left," said the Hunchback, musingly. "If rumour speaks truly, it must be very great."

"It is very great, Daniel, because Robert Smufflefuss has been fortunate in all his dealings from the very commencement. Everything he has touched has seemed to turn to gold," the marine-store dealer said.

"Except his daughter's marriage," suggested the Hunchback.

"Why in that he simply overreached himself," the marine-store dealer observed.

"The grand young lady that we saw give herself such airs in this very room has paid dearly and bitterly for her romantic notions—has she not, sir?" inquired the Hunchback.

"She has, indeed; and yet even in her humiliation she may find some little consolation, although it may be bitter," said the marine-store dealer.

"How, sir?"

"Why, even in her fall from the greatness to which she had been raised, there was something romantic, was there not?"

"That may be a consolation to her, it is true," said the Hunchback, smiling. "By-the-bye, sir," he said, rather abruptly, "do you remember what my father said about the objection that Sir Robert Smufflefuss had to making a will?"

The Hunchback still spoke of old Targin as his father, although, as he now knew, no such relationship existed between them.

"I do recollect it, Daniel—what of that?"

"If he has made no will, how will his affairs stand? What will be the position of his family?" the Hunchback inquired.

"It will scarcely be of any consequence, because there can be no doubt that they were a united family enough; and if he had made a will it would only have been to provide for the whole of the family—to leave his wealth amongst them."

"Yes, sir, and his not having made such a will, what then?"

"Why, dying intestate, the law provides that which the will, if made, in all probability would have contained," said the marine-store dealer.

"What is that, sir?" the Hunchback inquired.

"Why, the family will share the property amongst them."

"Then that is what my father meant, sir, you may depend on it. In case there is no will, I suppose he will share as one of the relatives of the late sheriff," the Hunchback suggested.

"I think not, Daniel. If there were no children he would take the share of his wife, who you know was the aunt of Sir Robert Smufflefuss; but, as there is a family, all the property must be divided amongst them."

"What could he have meant, then, when he talked about his own will and the legacy he had to leave?" the Hunchback asked.

"That is a very deep mystery that old Targin has got to solve; for, as you know, Daniel, there is something very deep in it, I am sure," said the marine-store dealer.

"It must be a very deep mystery, sir, to be a mystery at all with him," said the Hunchback, with a meaning smile.

"You mean that he is rather inclined to be garrulous," the marine-store dealer said, "and so he is not likely to keep an ordinary secret, eh?"

"That is what I mean, sir; it must be something of grave import indeed for him to keep so closely sealed up."

"I dare say we shall hear something about it as soon as he knows what has taken place," said the marine-store dealer.

"That we shall know this morning, then, sir, for I sent him yesterday evening's paper containing the announcement of the sudden death of the sheriff."

"Then you may depend upon it he will be here this morning," said the marine-store dealer.

And he certainly might have had the gift of prophecy upon him, for scarcely had he uttered the words before the little old man referred to walked into the room, evidently in a state of considerable excitement.

"I never calculated upon this, Mr. Nettleford," he said, almost out of breath, and taking the paper containing the announcement of the death of the sheriff from his pocket—"I never calculated upon this for one minute, sir."

"Nor, I suppose, did anybody else, Targin," said the marine-store dealer. "Such events never are calculated upon, are they?"

"I am sure *he* didn't—no, that I am sure of, and it really looks like a judgment upon him."

The little old man of course alluded to the deceased sheriff.

"And now, I suppose, Targin, you are come to tell us your grand secret, eh?" said the marine-store dealer.

"All in good time, Mr. Nettleford—all in good time, sir," said the little old man, in a very excited manner.

"Sit down, Targin—sit down, and let us talk the matter over," and the marine-store dealer handed a chair to the little old man.

"Where is your son, Mr. Nettleford?" inquired the little old man.

"He is at his chambers."

"Will you have the goodness to send for him?"

"Certainly, I will; but what do you want with him?" inquired the marine-store dealer.

"I cannot do without him—I cannot carry out the intention I have come here with without him," said the little old man, hurriedly.

"Very good, then Daniel shall go and fetch him," said the marine-store dealer.

"Haven't you got anybody else that

can go, Mr. Nettleford?" inquired the little old man.

"I dare say I can find somebody else, Targin, but why not Daniel, eh?"

"Because I want him to remain here too, if you have no objection."

"Certainly, none in the world. Who can we get to go, Daniel?" the marine-store dealer inquired of the Hunchback.

"Suppose we telegraph to Mr. Henry, sir?" suggested the Hunchback.

"Right, boy, right—the very thing, boy—that will be the quickest too!" cried the little old man, in the same excited tone as before.

"There is a telegraph-office only a couple of doors off, shall I go and telegraph the message to Mr. Henry?" said the Hunchback.

"Do, Daniel," replied the marine-store dealer; "and tell him, Daniel boy, to come instantly, for there is something going on of the greatest importance to him and to all of us!" and the little old man rubbed his hands and walked up and down the room in much excitement.

The Hunchback immediately proceeded on his mission. When he was gone, the marine-store dealer said to the little old man—

"But how is my son affected in this matter, Targin?"

"He is one of the family, isn't he?"

"Not exactly, yet," said the marine-store dealer, laughing.

"Well, he will be, so it's all the same," returned the little old man in a confident tone; "and I want to provide for him."

"Oh, I shall do that, you need not fear," said the marine-store dealer, laughing.

"Don't think me inquisitive, Mr. Nettleford," the little old man said; "but do tell me how?"

"I don't know that I need make any secret of it now, Targin; I am going to retire, Targin."

"Retire!—what, from the business?"

"Yes. I have made an ample competency; indeed, for myself, if I had only myself to think about, I have done that long ago; but I have an ample competency for my son Harry, and I am going to retire."

"Where to, sir?" the little old man eagerly inquired.

"Will it astonish you much if I say Streatham?" the marine-store dealer inquired.

"No, no, I wont have my plan taken

out of my own mouth; I wont indeed, sir!" cried the little old man.

"Why, what do you mean, Targin?" inquired the marine-store dealer, in a tone of much surprise.

"Well, sir, perhaps I am in a little too much of a hurry; I was going to let it out too soon," and the little old man chuckled.

"Upon my word, you are quite tantalizing, Targin," said the marine-store dealer, good-humouredly.

"And what do you intend to do with the business, sir?" the little old man inquired, reverting to the former subject of discussion.

"I will not be so mysterious and secret as you are, Targin, but will tell you at once what I intend to do with it. As I have told you, I have got enough—an ample competency—I have made my son a gentleman—and he is about to settle as a gentleman. That has been the first stroke—it is accomplished. Daniel Targin (for until I learn what your secret is, I must still call him so) has been a good, faithful, honest servant to me ever since you placed him with me, Targin, and he has assisted me to gain that which I now possess: I hope I am not a Robert Smugglefuss, Targin."

"As different as chalk and cheese," ejaculated the little old man between his teeth.

"And I don't forget old services rendered, and turn my back upon old friends. Targin, I am going to give Daniel the business."

Why, what is that little old man about to do? He rises, evidently inspired by some sudden impulse, but he is unequal to it, whatever it is, for he falls back into his chair, and burying his face in his hands, sobs like a little child.

"Why, Targin, Targin, what's this, old man?" says the marine-store dealer, cheerily, but with a tremor in his voice nevertheless.

There was a pause, during which the emotion of the little old man had full play.

At length the marine-store dealer said, "Come, old man, cheer up. You have no objection to the arrangement, have you?" he inquired, laughing.

And the little old man did cheer up, and he laughed as he removed his hands from his face.

"I didn't intend to let out my secret quite so soon, but I must tell it you now, Mr. Nettleford," he said; "and it has become more than ever important, as

though the thing was done on purpose," he added, in a musing tone, as though he were addressing himself. "Mr. Nettleford, you know the court they call the Probate Court, don't you, sir?"

The marine-store dealer said he did.

"And do you often read the cases that are heard in that court, sir?"

"When there's anything that looks like worth reading," replied the marine-store dealer, smiling. "Why?"

"Because, sir, there has been a case decided there lately that most materially affects my secret. Look here, sir," and he produced some papers from his pocket, and taking one from the bundle, he said— "There," handing it to the marine-store dealer; "there, sir, that is the certificate of Daniel's birth and baptism."

The marine-store dealer took it, looked at it, and then exclaimed—"Why, what relation is he, then—not a son?"

"No, not a son; I have told you that before, Mr. Nettleford."

"Well, if he's not a son, Targin, your secret isn't worth much, even if Sir Robert Smugglefuss has died intestate," said the marine-store dealer.

"He is not a son, and you'll see that my secret is worth something."

The little old man looked over his bundle of papers and selected one, saying—"Now here, Mr. Nettleford, is the document that I intended to be my will, in which I had nothing to leave but a direction—you will understand it in one minute, sir, especially after that case that was decided lately in the Probate Court. Just look at this, sir."

He was in the act of handing the document to the marine-store dealer when the Hunchback re-entered the room.

"Put it in your pocket, sir, and read it by-and-by," said the little old man, hastily; and then turning to the Hunchback, he said—"Well, Daniel, have you telegraphed?"

"Yes, I have, and have got an answer," replied the Hunchback.

"Dear me, you don't say so!" exclaimed the little old man. "They must have been wonderfully quick, Daniel." And then turning to the marine-store dealer, he said—"What a wonderful thing steam is, sir!" He evidently associated steam and electricity together.

"There is no doubt of it, Targin, old man; but what has that to do with sending a telegraphic message?" replied the marine-store dealer.

"Why, how could Daniel have sent

this message to Mr. Henry, and have got an answer in less than no time, if steam hadn't been discovered?"

Both the marine-store dealer and the Hunchback laughed at this, and the former said—"Why, Targin, old man, the message wasn't sent by steam, it was sent by the wires."

"Well, never mind how it was sent, sir, as long as it has been sent," said old Targin. "And what is the answer, Daniel?"

"That he will come immediately."

"And that reply having been sent, I think you may as well tell me, Targin, old man, what it is that you want with my son?" said the marine-store dealer.

"He's been a-studying of the law, hasn't he, sir?"

"Yes, that is to be his profession."

"Then I suppose he knows how to draw a dokymen, eh?" inquired the old man, with his head knowingly held on one side.

"That I can't answer for, Targin. What sort of document do you mean—a will, Targin?" And the marine-store dealer laughed expressively as he put this question.

"No, sir, not exactly a will, and yet it will be something like it, too. What is it when you've got something to leave and don't leave it, but the person has it all the same?" inquired the little old man, earnestly.

"Well, if I rightly understand your question, Targin, old man, you must mean a deed of gift," replied the marine-store dealer.

"That's it, sir—deed of gift, that's the very thing that I want to do," said the little old man, rubbing his hands with glee.

"You, old man!" cried the marine-store dealer, in a tone of cheery perplexity. "Why, what is it that you mean? Are you going to make a deed of gift of your old turn-up bedstead down at Wandsworth?"

"Never you mind, Mr. Nettleford. I aint going to make no deed of gift myself, but I want a deed of gift draw'd up, and there's nobody as can do it but your son, sir."

"I'm very glad to hear that he can be of such service to you, Targin; and I am sure he will be glad too," the marine-store dealer said.

"Daniel," cried the little old man to the Hunchback, "you've often heard me speak of the Smugglefusses, and how

upstart they was—you've often heard me speak of that, haven't you?"

"Yes, I have indeed," replied the Hunchback, laughing.

"You recollect how they served your poor mother, as you used to call her?"

"I do indeed," said the Hunchback, seriously.

"Especially, Daniel, do you recollect how Smugglefuss's wife spoke of her, Daniel? How she said that your mother, as you called her, ought to go into the workhouse down in Cornwall, eh, Daniel? And how she said as she was no blood of her'n, Daniel, eh? And how she said that they'd always been a precious sight too good to me, considering what I'd said about Bob's coming up in the waggin?—and how years after they almost turned me out of their house when I wanted to do 'em a good turn, and when I was willin' to forget and forgive? You remember all this, Daniel, don't you, boy, eh?" And the little old man worked himself up to a pitch of great excitement as he recalled these memories to the mind of the Hunchback.

"And you wont forget these things now, Daniel, will you?" continued the old man. "Promise me that, Daniel."

The Hunchback said he certainly could have no difficulty in doing that, although he did not see the utility of it.

"Never you mind, boy; that's for me to judge of. Perhaps you wont soon forget your own reception in the office of Sir Robert Smugglefuss, eh, Daniel?"

This allusion seemed to rouse the spirit which had been created in the Hunchback by his deformity. Ever since the accident when he was indebted to Henry Nettleford for his life, that spirit had apparently been subdued, and seemed to have taken the form of melancholy. His better nature appeared to have been vindicated by his daily increasing attachment to the son of the marine-store dealer, but that the old spirit was not dead—was amply proved by such incidents as that of the visit to the office of the sheriff, and by such allusions as the little old man had just made.

"This, I have no doubt, is Mr. Henry," cried the Hunchback, as the sound of wheels stopping at the door of the shop was heard, and he hastily left the room to see. He was right in his conjecture, for the next minute he returned, ushering in Henry Nettleford.

"Well, Harry!" exclaimed the marine-store dealer, greeting his son warmly,

"this is a terrible thing down at Ganges Hall."

"It is indeed a fearful event," said Henry Nettleford, "and I feel myself in very considerable perplexity as to what course I should pursue under the circumstances."

"Will you allow me to offer you a word of advice, sir?" the little old man inquired.

"Certainly, I shall be happy to receive it; for do I not look upon you as one of the family down at Streatham?"

"You'll have more cause to say that, perhaps, by-and-by, young gentleman; but we shall see: but at present, take my advice, sir, and don't you go down there until after the funeral."

"I confess that that suggestion is in accordance with my own thoughts upon the subject," said the young man.

"Very well, then, sir, you can't do better than follow your own thoughts," said the little old man, decidedly.

Henry Nettleford looked towards his father, who nodded, and said—

"I think so too, Harry."

"That being settled, now then to business, if you please, sir," said the little old man, with much liveliness of manner.

"Old Targin here has got a strange commission for you, Harry," said the marine-store dealer. "He wants you to draw up a deed of gift for him, and yet he has nothing to give."

"That's it, exactly," said the little old man, chuckling.

Henry Nettleford looked, with an expression of incredulity upon his countenance, first at his father and then at old Targin, as though he desired an explanation from one of them.

"Will you do it, sir?" inquired the little old man.

"Before I can answer that question, I must know exactly what it is that you wish me to do," the young man replied.

"I'll tell you, sir—this is it," cried the little old man, with alacrity: "I want you, sir, to draw up a dokymen between two parties what shall be nameless at present," and here he glanced knowingly at the marine-store dealer; "a dokymen that one party agrees to give to the other party one-half of the whole business of the one party, if the other party chooses to accept of it. There, sir, I think that's plain enough, aint it?" and the little old man drew himself up as though he had made the matter perfectly clear to the meanest capacity.

though the thing was done on purpose," he added, in a musing tone, as though he were addressing himself. "Mr. Nettleford, you know the court they call the Probate Court, don't you, sir?"

The marine-store dealer said he did.

"And do you often read the cases that are heard in that court, sir?"

"When there's anything that looks like worth reading," replied the marine-store dealer, smiling. "Why?"

"Because, sir, there has been a case decided there lately that most materially affects my secret. Look here, sir," and he produced some papers from his pocket, and taking one from the bundle, he said—"There," handing it to the marine-store dealer; "there, sir, that is the certificate of Daniel's birth and baptism."

The marine-store dealer took it, looked at it, and then exclaimed—"Why, what relation is he, then—not a son?"

"No, not a son; I have told you that before, Mr. Nettleford."

"Well, if he's not a son, Targin, your secret isn't worth much, even if Sir Robert Smugglefuss has died intestate," said the marine-store dealer.

"He is not a son, and you'll see that my secret is worth something."

The little old man looked over his bundle of papers and selected one, saying—"Now here, Mr. Nettleford, is the document that I intended to be my will, in which I had nothing to leave but a direction—you will understand it in one minute, sir, especially after that case that was decided lately in the Probate Court. Just look at this, sir."

He was in the act of handing the document to the marine-store dealer when the Hunchback re-entered the room.

"Put it in your pocket, sir, and read it by-and-by," said the little old man, hastily; and then turning to the Hunchback, he said—"Well, Daniel, have you telegraphed?"

"Yes, I have, and have got an answer," replied the Hunchback.

"Dear me, you don't say so!" exclaimed the little old man. "They must have been wonderfully quick, Daniel." And then turning to the marine-store dealer, he said—"What a wonderful thing steam is, sir!" He evidently associated steam and electricity together.

"There is no doubt of it, Targin, old man; but what has that to do with sending a telegraphic message?" replied the marine-store dealer.

"Why, how could Daniel have sent

this message to Mr. Henry, and have got an answer in less than no time, if steam hadn't been discovered?"

Both the marine-store dealer and the Hunchback laughed at this, and the former said—"Why, Targin, old man, the message wasn't sent by steam, it was sent by the wires."

"Well, never mind how it was sent, sir, as long as it has been sent," said old Targin. "And what is the answer, Daniel?"

"That he will come immediately."

"And that reply having been sent, I think you may as well tell me, Targin, old man, what it is that you want with my son?" said the marine-store dealer.

"He's been a-studying of the law, hasn't he, sir?"

"Yes, that is to be his profession."

"Then I suppose he knows how to draw a dokymen, eh?" inquired the old man, with his head knowingly held on one side.

"That I can't answer for, Targin. What sort of document do you mean—a will, Targin?" And the marine-store dealer laughed expressively as he put this question.

"No, sir, not exactly a will, and yet it will be something like it, too. What is it when you've got something to leave and don't leave it, but the person has it all the same?" inquired the little old man, earnestly.

"Well, if I rightly understand your question, Targin, old man, you must mean a deed of gift," replied the marine-store dealer.

"That's it, sir—deed of gift, that's the very thing that I want to do," said the little old man, rubbing his hands with glee.

"You, old man!" cried the marine-store dealer, in a tone of cheery perplexity. "Why, what is it that you mean? Are you going to make a deed of gift of your old turn-up bedstead down at Wandsworth?"

"Never you mind, Mr. Nettleford. I aint going to make no deed of gift myself, but I want a deed of gift draw'd up, and there's nobody as can do it but your son, sir."

"I'm very glad to hear that he can be of such service to you, Targin; and I am sure he will be glad too," the marine-store dealer said.

"Daniel," cried the little old man to the Hunchback, "you've often heard me speak of the Smugglefusses, and how

upstart they was—you've often heard me speak of that, haven't you?"

"Yes, I have indeed," replied the Hunchback, laughing.

"You recollect how they served your poor mother, as you used to call her?"

"I do indeed," said the Hunchback, seriously.

"Especially, Daniel, do you recollect how Smugglefuss's wife spoke of her, Daniel? How she said that your mother, as you called her, ought to go into the workhouse down in Cornwall, eh, Daniel? And how she said as she was no blood of her'n, Daniel, eh? And how she said that they'd always been a precious sight too good to me, considering what I'd said about Bob's coming up in the waggin?—and how years after they almost turned me out of their house when I wanted to do 'em a good turn, and when I was willin' to forget and forgive? You remember all this, Daniel, don't you, boy, eh?" And the little old man worked himself up to a pitch of great excitement as he recalled these memories to the mind of the Hunchback.

"And you wont forget these things now, Daniel, will you?" continued the old man. "Promise me that, Daniel."

The Hunchback said he certainly could have no difficulty in doing that, although he did not see the utility of it.

"Never you mind, boy; that's for me to judge of. Perhaps you wont soon forget your own reception in the office of Sir Robert Smufflefuss, eh, Daniel?"

This allusion seemed to rouse the spirit which had been created in the Hunchback by his deformity. Ever since the accident when he was indebted to Henry Nettleford for his life, that spirit had apparently been subdued, and seemed to have taken the form of melancholy. His better nature appeared to have been vindicated by his daily increasing attachment to the son of the marine-store dealer, but that the old spirit was not dead was amply proved by such incidents as that of the visit to the office of the sheriff, and by such allusions as the little old man had just made.

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"Why, it appears to me that you want a kind of partnership deed," said Harry Nettleford.

"That's it!—that's it!—that's it!" exclaimed the little old man, with great animation.

"I can draw you up a deed of partnership, I dare say," said Henry Nettleford, smiling.

"And will you, sir?" the little old man inquired eagerly.

"Oh, certainly," responded Henry Nettleford, laughing.

"Very good, then; before we proceed into that business, I've got to ask the favour of a promise solemn, and no feeling to trip it up," said the little old man to the marine-store dealer—"a promise from you and your son, sir."

"And what is that, you mysterious old Targin?" asked the marine-store dealer, laughing in spite of himself.

"Why this, sir. You know he's one of the Streatham family after all, sir, and what I want you to promise is this here: if the law say that so and so is so and so, you wont let your feelin's get the better of you and try to stop me and Daniel here in what we shall have to do."

The elder Nettleford looked rather bewildered at this question, but the younger said—"If I understand you, it is that we should promise not to disobey the law."

"To let the law take its course, as they say when a chap's going to be hung," said the little old man, and again he drew himself up as though he had put the matter conclusively.

"We certainly can safely promise that," said Henry Nettleford.

"And you do promise it?"

"I think I may venture to say that we do so promise," and Henry Nettleford laughed and looked at his father, who nodded his approval.

"Very well, then; that matter secured, will you have the goodness to read the last paper that I gave you, sir?" said the little old man.

The marine-store dealer took the paper from his pocket and read, and his face immediately assumed what appeared almost a ludicrous expression of astonishment.

"Good Lord!" he exclaimed, "this is a secret indeed," and he handed the paper to his son, who, having perused it, looked at the little old man with a stare of almost ludicrous astonishment.

"Now, sir, that you can see which way the cat jumps, will you have the goodness to draw up the dokyment I asked you for," said the little old man.

"Suppose you and Daniel here come with me to my chambers," suggested Henry Nettleford to the little old man, in a tone of abstraction.

"Right, sir, the very thing; and I can tell you there exactly how to do it and what to say. And I say, Mr. Nettleford," said the little old man, turning to the marine-store dealer, "I'll tell him the right names to put into it, that I will," and Sir Robert Smugglefuss's aunt's husband chuckled as he said this.

And so the Hunchback was directed to go out and fetch a cab, and having procured one, Henry Nettleford, and the little old man, and the Hunchback took their way in it to the Temple.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE AVALANCHE UPON GANGES HALL.

THE funeral of Sir Robert Smufflefuss was a very grand display of the kind. Indeed, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle declared that a more gorgeous funeral *cortège* had never been seen in Streatham. It has passed—the event has been duly canvassed, and at the end of the nine days will have passed away from the general mind, for *sic transit gloria mundi*; and even the memory of Sir Robert Smufflefuss, and such great men as he, does not supply an exception to that inevitable course so indicated.

The lady of the late Sir Robert Smufflefuss is seated in the dining-room, with the whole of her family around her. Mary is there, and Georgina, and Robert; and Mrs. Bulkinfuddle is present, for in reality a *conseil de famille* is being held as to the course for the future that is to be adopted. Of course the business is to be conducted by the young man, the sole remaining male representative of the great house of Smufflefuss and Company; and the solicitor to the house has been communicated with, and he is to be down at Ganges Hall this morning to arrange about the necessary steps for taking out letters of administration, it having been duly ascertained that the late Sir Robert Smufflefuss had died intestate.

The family party, with the assistance of Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, are discussing family matters generally, preparatory to the arrival of the man of law, and pre-

sently a carriage is heard to drive up to the front entrance to the Hall.

"Here is Mr. Dexter, Robert," said Lady Smufflefuss; "you had better put the writing materials on the table."

And Robert Smufflefuss immediately did so. The arrival at the entrance-hall, however, was not that of Mr. Dexter, for the gentleman out of livery at Ganges Hall entered the room and presented a card to Lady Smufflefuss, the sight of which made that good lady turn quite pale.

"It isn't Mr. Dexter," she said, faintly.

"Who is it, then?" demanded Robert Smufflefuss.

His lady mother handed the card across to him, and he read aloud—

"Mr. Henry Nettleford."

"What!" cried Mary, in a tone of affright, for she had never seen her former lover since her marriage with the Nabob Darsham Typos Ghurr was discovered to be invalid. "Do not see him, mamma," she said, in a choking voice; "or if you do, let me go away first."

"You may depend upon it he has not come upon any trifling matter. What do you say, Georgy?" inquired Robert.

But Georgina did not say anything, whatever her thoughts were, and she looked first at her mother and then at Mary.

"What do you say, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle?" Lady Smufflefuss asked of her friend.

Of course Mrs. Bulkinfuddle had the usual curiosity of her sex, and as she thought, with Robert Smufflefuss, that Henry Nettleford could not at such a time have come upon any trifling matter, she at once said that, considering the circumstances, she thought Lady Smufflefuss ought to see the young man. He might have some important revelations to make.

Why, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, good lady, the spirit of prophecy might have been upon you.

"Then we will see him," Lady Smufflefuss said, loftily.

"I cannot be present," Mary sighed, "and I think you had better not remain, Georgina."

But Georgina herself was not of that opinion, and so she remained, and as Mary left the room Lady Smufflefuss issued instructions that Henry Nettleford should be admitted to the council chamber.

When Henry Nettleford entered he courteously saluted his several friends there assembled, and after the usual con-

dolences had passed, he said that he had intruded himself upon the family circle at that melancholy moment, in order to carry out perhaps the most important mission that would ever fall to his lot in life.

"He's going to propose for Georgina," thought Mrs. Bulkinfuddle. "Well, I think in decency he might have waited a little longer."

"As it is a matter of the gravest possible import to your family, Lady Smufflefuss, and as it is a matter of the most extreme delicacy, I must request the favour of consulting with you alone," said Henry Nettleford.

"Certainly; that is very proper—that is commendable delicacy," thought Mrs. Bulkinfuddle.

Lady Smufflefuss looked a little scared, and scarcely knew what to do or say; she therefore said—

"What do you think, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle?"

"Mr. Nettleford wishes to have a little private conversation with you, my dear Lady Smufflefuss, and of course he has very good reasons for it,"—she said this sagaciously—"so, my dear Georgina, and you, Robert, will go into the breakfast-room and leave Mr. Nettleford with your mamma."

And, acting upon this suggestion, the three left the room.

"I am about to make a revelation to you," commenced Henry Nettleford, "which will require all your fortitude—all your strength of mind to receive."

It is not at all surprising that the good lady should look frightened at this introduction to the subject-matter that Henry Nettleford had in hand.

"It is imperative, however, that it should be made," continued Henry Nettleford; "and as I have—unwillingly, believe me—been made the chief depository of it, I have taken upon myself the duty of seeing you to-day, as you will, I trust, yet see, out of consideration to you."

The lady of the late sheriff said she was sure she always had the highest opinion of Mr. Nettleford.

"Sir Robert Smufflefuss, it has been ascertained, has died intestate," said Henry Nettleford, solemnly. "The whole of the property therefore will fall to his next of kin, under the Statute of Distribution."

The lady said she had been informed of that already.

"Probably you have not also been informed that there is but one person living

who stands in that relation?" said Henry Nettleford, very seriously.

"What do you mean, young man?" exclaimed the lady, very sharply. "Ain't there his three children and me?"

"True, too true," said Henry Nettleford; "but they do not stand in that relation to him."

"What do you dare to say, young man?"

"Pray calm yourself," said Henry Nettleford, solemnly. "Believe me, I am here to serve your interests."

"Who is next of kin, then, if they ain't?" demanded the lady, sharply.

"His brother."

"His brother!—he never had one."

"So he supposed all his life, but the fact is indubitably so, nevertheless."

"And even supposing he had, what's that to do with the children?" demanded the lady.

"Everything. Let me recite a brief narrative," said Henry Nettleford. "You formerly had an elder sister."

The lady looks at Henry Nettleford with a blank stare amounting almost to one of horror.

"She was married, was she not?"

"She was," faintly replied the lady.

"And her husband was the late Sir Robert Smufflefuss."

"True enough, true enough, Mr. Nettleford; but she never had any children," cried the lady, in a tone of much distress.

"But she was your sister," replied Henry Nettleford, sadly; "and although you were subsequently married to Sir Robert Smufflefuss, the law has declared such a marriage to be illegal."

"Oh, dear me!" cried the lady in great distress, "I was married, I know I was married—I've got the certificate, I have! I have!"

"It is a happiness to me to know that I have been made the instrument by which this terrible calamity—for such this revelation must be to all your family—may be robbed of much of its terrible effects."

"But I say that Sir Robert never had no brother," said the lady, wringing her hands.

"Believe me, that is beyond dispute. He is in this house at this moment."

"Here!" shrieked the lady.

"Even so; and it is my duty to present him to you—pardon me for a moment."

And Henry Nettleford rose and quitted the room. As soon as he had done so, Mrs.

Bulkinfuddle, and Robert, and Georgina returned, impelled thereto by the sobs which they heard proceeding from the apartment, and by the not unnatural curiosity of Mrs. Bulkinfuddle.

"My goodness gracious me, my dear friend," exclaimed that good lady, the moment she entered the room, "whatever is the matter, and what has he been saying?"

"Oh, I'm a poor forlorn, unhappy woman!" responded Lady Smufflefuss, "but I've got the certificate, I have! I have!"

"The certificate!" cried Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, "what certificate? The certificate of the death?"

Mrs. Bulkinfuddle was suddenly impressed with a vague but terrible notion that the exclamation of her friend had some reference to the sudden demise of the sheriff and its cause.

"No, no, the marriage certificate," replied Lady Smufflefuss, with her face in her hands.

"Oh, she means Mary's certificate," thought Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, and then she said soothingly to the lady of the house,—"Well, of course, dear, we know that that is worth nothing now, and if that's what he came to tell you, I think it was very contemptible of him."

"Worth nothing!" screamed Lady Smufflefuss. "Then did you know about it all the time?"

"Why, of course I did," replied Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, in a tone of astonishment. "Doesn't all the world know of it, more's the pity?"

"All the world know of it already!" Lady Smufflefuss cried, in a tone of helpless distress. "Then it's true! Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do?"

"What can she mean?" said Mrs. Bulkinfuddle to Robert Smufflefuss.

That young gentleman did not reply in words, but his action was almost as expressive. He touched his forehead with his forefinger and then nodded toward his maternal parent significantly.

Mrs. Bulkinfuddle elevated her eyebrows sympathetically, as though she would say, "That did not strike me before, but now you suggest it, I think with you."

"Oh, why did you not tell me of it before, and not leave it to a stranger like that young man who wanted Mary, to be the one to come and knock me down, which I may truly, on my bended knees, declare it has?"

"There, never mind, dear, never mind," said Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, soothingly; "it's all over now, you know, so let us think no more about it."

"All over!" cried Lady Smufflefuss, in despair; "why, it's only just a-beginning."

Mrs. Bulkinfuddle nodded her head significantly at Robert Smufflefuss, as though she would say, "It is as you think—there is no doubt about it."

"And you to tell me the certificate's of no use—to tell me that at this time of day. Why couldn't you as a friend have told me and poor dear Sir Robert, who is now dead and gone—why couldn't you have told me before?"

"Sir Robert knew it, of course," said Mrs. Bulkinfuddle.

"I don't believe he did; at all events, leastways, I'm sure he never knowed of the next o' kin," said Lady Smufflefuss, in a tone of great lamentation.

"Next of kin!" thought Mrs. Bulkinfuddle. "Does she allude to the Begum, the nabob's mother, I wonder? It must be so." And then she said, aloud, "Of course, dear, he did not know of that until the next of kin appeared."

"He hasn't appeared—he hasn't brought him in yet!" exclaimed Lady Smufflefuss.

"Not brought him in! What do you mean?" Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, in a tone of bewilderment, inquired.

"Why, the man—the next of kin, the brother, of course; though I'll take my solemn oath before the Lord Chancellor himself, that I never heard of a brother in all my life till now."

"She must be gone crazy all of a sudden," thought Mrs. Bulkinfuddle.

Both Robert Smufflefuss and his sister Georgina looked, as they in all probability felt, quite bewildered at the bearing and the declarations of their mother—so much so, indeed, that they seemed unable to support Mrs. Bulkinfuddle in the friendly cross-examination through which she was putting her friend.

Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, since the significant pantomimic action of Robert Smufflefuss, had convinced herself that the recent sudden events had shaken the intellect of the widow of the late Sir Robert Smufflefuss, and she now gazed upon her with mingled feelings of sympathy and curiosity. Up to this moment the lady of Ganges Hall had been almost overwhelmed with passionate grief, the outward evidences thereof being floods of tears and hysterical sobs. Her tri-

bulation, however, suddenly exhibited a new outward sign, which almost frightened Mrs. Bulkinfuddle. Lady Smufflefuss suddenly started to her feet, and, with much energy and with emphatic action, exclaimed—

"But I'll not be bamboozled. It's a trick, I know it is, and he shan't bring next of kin in here until Mr. Dexter comes—he shall hear what he has to say about it. I ought to have thought of that before."

"What do you mean by next of kin, mother?—what are you talking about?" said Robert Smufflefuss, at length finding his voice.

"And he's been a friend of yours at school, has he, my dear, to come and try on such a trick, for I'm sure it is a trick. I don't care what anybody says—it's some trick to spite Mary—there now, that's my belief!" and Lady Smufflefuss struck her hands together for emphasis.

"Has Henry Nettleford left the house?" inquired Robert.

"I suppose not, for he said the next of kin was in the house," replied Lady Smufflefuss.

"Then I'll go and ask for an explanation of this strange matter from himself," said Robert, hastily turning toward the door, to carry out the intention he had expressed.

"No, my dear, don't do nothing of the sort," said his lady mother, with much determination in her voice and gesture. "Mr. Dexter is sure to be here shortly, so let him tackle him."

"If Henry Nettleford is in the house, I will go and see him at once," said Robert; and he made for the door just at the instant that a rap was heard thereat.

"Oh, Lord! here he is," exclaimed Lady Smufflefuss, relapsing into her former trepidation. "Tell him he shan't bring next of kin until Mr. Dexter comes."

Mrs. Bulkinfuddle felt slightly embarrassed at this juncture, and so did Robert Smufflefuss.

"Don't let him bring next of kin until Mr. Dexter has come," said Lady Smufflefuss, with strong emphasis, as the rap at the door was repeated.

"Well, but we can't keep him waiting at the door," said Robert Smufflefuss; "I will go out to him."

And he opened the door for that purpose, but instead of Henry Nettleford being on the other side, he found that it

was Mr. Dexter, the family man of law, who had arrived.

"Aha!" said the little man, entering the room and rubbing his hands, "I was told you were here, Lady Smufflefuss, and so I came in without announcement."

As the little lawyer said this in a cheerful voice, he observed the evidence of distress upon Lady Smufflefuss, and being apparently thereby recalled to the recollection of the object of his mission, he dropped his cheerfulness, and assumed that solemnity of voice which he considered, rightly of course, was due to the occasion. He naturally thought that the manifestations of grief and trouble which were apparent upon the countenance of Lady Smufflefuss were due to her recent bereavement.

"Oh, Mr. Dexter!" cried Lady Smufflefuss, beating her dress with her hands, "I am so glad that you are come: here's such a dreadful calamity."

"Mother!" exclaimed Robert Smufflefuss, in a tone of great alarm.

"Calamity! Lady Smufflefuss," cried Mrs. Bulkinfuddle; "you have told us nothing about it!"

"No, why should I?" replied the lady, wringing her hands. "Don't you tell me that you know'd all about it before I did?"

"Well, at all events *I* knew nothing about it; so, Lady Smufflefuss, pray inform me what is the matter," said Mr. Dexter.

"Oh, I can't!—I can't!—I can't!" exclaimed Lady Smufflefuss, in a tone of great anguish. "It is too dreadful to tell you—it is dreadful, dreadful!"

"Pray be calm, my dear Lady Smufflefuss," said the little lawyer, soothingly; "and tell me what it is that agitates you so."

"Oh, that young man, Henry Nettleford, who wanted to have Mary, when the nabob inveigled her away—" said Lady Smufflefuss, rocking herself to and fro on her chair.

"And what of him?" blandly inquired Mr. Dexter.

"—Says that none of us has a right to the property," screamed Lady Smufflefuss, and in the excitement of blurting out the terrible intelligence springing to her feet.

Mr. Dexter smiled incredulously, and said this must be some delusion. Was the gentleman to whom Lady Smufflefuss referred in the house then?

"Has just stepped out to bring the next of kin," said Lady Smufflefuss.

"Where shall I find him? Perhaps I had better see the young man, and have the mistake explained, for of course there is some strange mistake somewhere," said Mr. Dexter.

"Do you think so, Mr. Dexter? Oh, the Lord be praised if you think so," said Lady Smufflefuss.

"I was just about to seek for Henry Nettleford as you came in, sir," said Robert Smufflefuss; "suppose we go together and see him. As you have remarked, I am sure there is some most extraordinary mistake that we must have cleared up at once."

"Most assuredly; let us seek him, then," Mr. Dexter said, but before the suggestion could be acted upon the door was again thrown open, and Henry Nettleford entered the room accompanied by the little old man from Wandsworth and the Hunchback.

Henry Nettleford bowed to Mr. Dexter, and said to that gentleman "I am very glad that you are here, sir; your presence is a great relief to me."

"What is this strange story that Lady Smufflefuss has vaguely alluded to?" Mr. Dexter inquired of Henry Nettleford.

"In a few words, I think it can be made quite intelligible to you, sir; but before we proceed with the explanation, I am sure you will agree with me that only the parties immediately concerned should be present. Bob," he said, extending his hand to Robert Smufflefuss, "take Georgina away, and I will join you presently." "All will end comfortably and happily," he whispered in Georgina's ear.

Robert Smufflefuss and his sister, with Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, having quitted the room, Henry Nettleford briefly explained to Mr. Dexter, as he had already done to Lady Smufflefuss, how matters stood.

"And is this Sir Robert Smufflefuss's brother?" said Mr. Dexter, pointing to the Hunchback.

"Nothing of the sort; he never had a brother," exclaimed Lady Smufflefuss, sobbing.

"Yes, he had, Mary," said the little old man, "as surely as you had a sister."

And then he went up to her side, and in a tone that was undoubtedly one much more of sorrow than of anger, said— "Mary, I have no doubt that this is a sore trial for you to bear, but as sure as

the words of truth, it hasn't been one of my seeking. I have come here, Mary, as you know, with good intent; but in your grandeur, Mary, you trampled on me, Mary—you and my wife's nephew, Mary. I come here, Mary, to warn you, but you was both blinded by all this glitter, which, when you come from Cornwall, you know'd nothing about," and as the little old man spoke, he waved his hand round the room to imply that he meant the glitter of the prosperity by which the Smugglefuss's had been surrounded. "I tried to warn you, Mary, and you wouldn't be warned, and I declared then, Mary, when I left this very room, that I never would try again; but I did try again for all that, for me and Daniel here went to Robert's office, and I tried again to warn him, but he wouldn't have it, and now the blow has come, Mary. You know well enough that you married your sister's husband, Mary."

"Poor Sophy was dead," sobbed Lady Smufflefuss.

"Of course she was," replied the little old man. "I ain't a-going to say as you committed bigamy; no, no, you didn't intend any harm—oh, I'm quite ready to admit that, Mary. You have only been weak and foolish, and so was Robert. But he's dead and gone now. I don't mean to say as you was in any fault, Mary, about your marriage, but the law says you was; and it's a bad law, I know, but it is the law, ain't it, sir?"

Mr. Dexter bowed an affirmative answer to the question.

"And so, Mary, your marriage with Robert was no marriage at all; and I wanted Robert to make his will long ago, and he never would."

"That's true enough," sighed Lady Smufflefuss.

"And as he made no will, why all his property as made him so upstart and you so grand, Mary, goes to his next of kin; and there is but one in the world, Mary, and there he stands"—and the little old man pointed to the Hunchback;—"but he's a good lad, Mary, and he's got his right feelings about him, Mary, and he's done as I've told him to do; and you and your children, Mary, wont suffer, and nobody beyond these two gentlemen," indicating Mr. Dexter and Henry Nettleford, "will ever know anything about the matter. The whole of the property, by law, belongs to Daniel Smufflefuss here, heretofore better beknown on Tower Hill as Daniel Targin, which he was nothing of

the sort, but Robert Smufflefuss's own brother, sent up to me, as Robert was, while Robert was in India. All the property is his, Mary, but he's disposed of it. This gentleman is the great friend of the family, Mary," (he pointed to Henry Nettleford). "Daniel has made over this house and estate to him, and it is understood that he'll marry your daughter, Mary!"

"My daughter Mary?"

"No, not your daughter Mary, Mary, but your other daughter, Mary. It's all arranged between 'em, sir," said the little old man, parenthetically, and addressing Mr. Dexter. "The house of business will still go on under the same name, but with different partners, and I—and I," and the little old man here spoke with a kind of choking utterance,—"and I shall go back to my almshouse, and be happy."

"Yes, happy, father," said the Hunchback; "but not in the almshouse again."

"Well, well, boy, we will see about that—we will see about that."

Lady Smufflefuss is still absorbed in grief, but still there is much consolation for her in what the little old man has said, and gradually she brightens up, particularly as Henry Nettleford presently addresses her as his mother that is to be.

Various other explanations are entered into for the satisfaction of Mr. Dexter, who, of course, ultimately finds that the object with which he personally had that morning visited Ganges Hall cannot be carried out. Still his services are requisite, and he takes new instructions—instructions that he certainly had never anticipated receiving in Ganges Hall.

And by the time the other members of the family, with Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, had been summoned into the room again, Lady Smufflefuss had become almost radiant through her tears.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

AND THE GREAT HOUSE OF SMUGGLEFUSS AND COMPANY STILL FLOURISHES.

THE great secret connected with the Smufflefuss family was tolerably well kept, although the neighbourhood of Streatham had a suspicion that something very mysterious had occurred. The wedding that took place in the family some few months after the death of the sheriff was not so grand and ostentatious as that one in which, the previous year,

the nabob, Darsham Typos Ghurr, appeared at Streatham church, but it was far more auspicious. Oh yes, Georgina was a happy bride indeed, and Henry Nettleford was justified in being proud of her. After the marriage they resided at Ganges Hall, which in right of the deed from the Hunchback, that in a previous chapter of this history was duly registered, was Henry Nettleford's property, and Lady Smufflefuss resided with them.

The great house in the City was unchanged with respect to its operations, although the partners in it were all new, but they were all of one family; for Daniel the Hunchback, and Robert, the only son of the late sheriff, and Henry Nettleford, were all of the Smufflefuss family now. Strange mutation undoubtedly it presented, for Daniel the Hunchback, a few months ago the managing clerk to a marine-store dealer and rag collector on Tower Hill, was now the head of the great house of Smufflefuss and Co. The three partners in that great house, however, took but little part in the active conduct of the business.

And the little old man, Targin, lives no longer in the almshouse down at Wandsworth. He would have been content to remain there, but the Hunchback, who would still persist in calling him father, would not hear of it. A pleasant house, looking on to the common at Streatham, was taken for him, and in a very short time he became quite a personage in that pleasant locality.

After the disclosure in the Divorce

Court the magnificent nabob, Darsham Typos Ghurr, became celebrated in newspaper paragraphs. "The eccentric nabob again," "A fresh exploit of the Nabob Darsham Typos Ghurr," "Darsham Typos Ghurr at a police court," and other attractive headings to sensational paragraphs, were of common appearance in the newspapers, until the conduct of the nabob became so outrageous that it was considered necessary to take steps legally to restrain him. Upon learning this, he fled away to Paris, where he died in a paroxysm of more than ordinary eccentricity and violence.

Mary, the elder daughter of the late sheriff, did not take the demise of the nabob to heart, but she became very altered in her character. She had long ceased to dream of marble halls and vassals by her side, and ultimately she became duly and properly reconciled to her family circle, and when she married the curate, who had very good connexions and prospects, she would have been scarcely recognised, as far as outward bearing and general manner were concerned, as the same proud, disdainful, and I suppose I must add, conceited girl, whom the nabob, Darsham Typos Ghurr, amidst such splendour, and under such apparently brilliant auspices, led to the altar of the church at Streatham.

The singed moths have now got new wings: the sunshine of true happiness shines upon them, for the experience of the past has taught them to shun that glare which, while it irresistibly attracts, does so only to destroy.

PERILS AND DISASTERS.

By LIEUT. WARNEFORD, R.N.

No. 7.—A CHRISTIAN HERO.

HE only is a true Christian gentleman of the highest type who, guiding his life and conversation by the strict line of duty, as traced by the revealed will of God, refuses to be diverted from it either by the blandishments of power or wealth, or, far harder to resist, the scoffs of polite society, the persiflage, the covert sneers, if he should happen to belong to one of the "services," of his professional brethren. General Havelock was one of these true heroes; but I venture to affirm that the coronal which will shine in fadeless lustre round the brows of that great soldier and greater man, when the breath of truth shall have dimmed, if not utterly extinguished, more glittering glories, was not of brighter lustre than that which, had the nobility of his life, the grandeur of his death, been displayed upon a loftier social eminence, would have been awarded to Captain Frobisher by the suffrages of all who in that case would have become familiar with the heroic story. When Charles Frobisher coolly accepted the gift of a severe fate, shook hands with the King of Terrors, and looked him calmly in the face, he was a mere civilian captain—the skipper of a merchant barque. It was not in battle, nor did a tempest give the shock, when that young Paladin, in an infinitely higher sense than is conventionally attached to the word, gave up his life, not in misanthropic disdain of the sublime God-gift, but because—simply because duty required the sacrifice. What a fine unconscious eulogy, by the way, is that passed upon the Duke of Wellington by an eloquent French historian, who has remarked that whilst the word "duty" frequently occurs in the Duke's despatches, the word "glory" does not once appear. This was meant as a sneer.

Charles Frobisher was born in the Isle of Wight, somewhere about the neighbourhood of Bonchurch. His father, Martin Frobisher, claimed, whether truly or not, to be a lineal descendant of Frobisher, the great seaman of Elizabeth's time. He was owner and master of a coasting schooner, and appears to have been a rough-grained but good

sort of man. The death of his son Martin, when a mere youth, soured his never very sweet temper. Charles, his only surviving child, he loved ardently, but felt strong doubts that "he should ever make a man of him," what with his naturally placid, gentle disposition, and the teachings of his mother. Mrs. Frobisher was a meek-tempered Christian woman, strongly attached to her rough, boisterous partner. Her love for him originated in gratitude. She had embarked with her mother, the widow of Mr. Cunningham, whom they had accompanied to the Azores, in the fond hope that consumption, which had nearly accomplished its work, would be arrested, thrown back from its homicidal path by the wooing, balmy air of that delicious climate. The vessel in which the widow and daughter sailed for England, after the death of Mr. Cunningham, was wrecked during a terrific gale at the back of the Wight. Martin Frobisher, one of the most daring mariners afloat—not by his unaided exertions, but he was the guiding, controlling spirit of the rescuers—brought off in safety, and after almost incredible exertions, the whole of the passengers, and, with three exceptions, the crew. Mrs. Cunningham and her daughter were taken to Martin Frobisher's house, tenderly ministered to, and though their state was a precarious one when they were brought on shore, from exposure, terror, and drenching by the sea, which broke furiously over the stranded ship, recovered in a few weeks their pristine, though not at any time very vigorous health. Mrs. and Miss Cunningham remained in the Isle of Wight, and settled near Yarmouth. But a few months elapsed before Julia Cunningham was Mrs. Frobisher, with the full consent of her mother. Not many weeks afterwards that tender mother was carried to her long home, and the mourners went about the streets.

Martin Frobisher was a sensible man in a general way, but he had one particular craze. In virtue of his real or imaginary descent from Elizabeth's gallant sailor knight, he claimed, though

only himself the skipper of a coasting schooner, to be in all respects entitled to the privileges of a gentleman—the privilege of the duello especially. Once before his marriage he had claimed and exercised that right; he had gone out with and grievously wounded his antagonist, Lieutenant Plover, of the *Racehorse* brig of war, with whom he had had a tavern quarrel. It was this peculiar gentleman mania which finally terminated his career by a pistol-bullet, and killed his wife by consuming sorrow for his loss. Before, however, we relate the circumstances of that tragedy, it will be well to return to the story of the son Charles;—the first indicative chapter of that story, I mean.

The father's opinion of the milksopishness of his surviving son was much modified by that son's daring exploit in jumping into the sea during a furious storm and in the night, to save a man who had fallen overboard. The lad succeeded, and henceforth Martin Frobisher inclined to the belief that Charles would, circumstances favouring, reach a higher rank in the maritime social scale, than he had before deemed possible. There was, he was convinced, unmistakable seaman-stuff in him, the ring of true metal, though not of the devil-may-care type of which he himself was an exemplar.

Martin Frobisher determined that his son should by recognised social status be a "gentleman." He had influence, however acquired, with John Wilson Croker, then Secretary of the Admiralty, and a midshipman's warrant was easily obtained for the youth. The vocation was not to Charles Frobisher's taste, nor to that of his mother. But the father's will was paramount, and the young man entered on board the *Sibyl* sloop of war. He did his duty: perfected himself in seamanship, passed as lieutenant, just as the giant war with France and her allies was wrestled down. With hundreds of others he was flung upon the world without a shilling from the Government to help his scramble through it. An undoubted gentleman, nevertheless, technically as well as really.

He immediately took steps to obtain employment in the British mercantile marine, and at one time thought of accepting service in the commercial navy of America. He would have had no difficulty in doing so, his testimonials as to skilled seamanship and strictly steady conduct being unexceptionable; but his father objected. Like many of his class,

he had an unreasoning contempt for all other sea services than that of Great Britain. The result was that Charles Frobisher passed as competent to fulfil the functions of a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, accepted the post of first mate of the barque *Mendip*, trading between London and the West Indies. Lucky for the owners of the *Mendip* and her cargo; or at all events, for the underwriters who had insured the *Mendip* and her cargo, was it that he did so. On the return voyage, the barque having encountered a terrible gale which dismasted her, and the general look of things—two ugly leaks amongst its most repulsive features—the general look of things, I say, being dismal in the extreme, the captain lost his head, took to drinking furiously, and abandoned the charge of his ship, which of course devolved upon Charles Frobisher. He proved himself fully equal to his responsibilities, and the *Mendip* under jury-masts anchored at the Nore, all safe, except the sticks which had been carried away. The first mate's conduct was so highly appreciated by the owners of the *Mendip*, that he was at once offered the command of her, which offer he of course accepted. The *Mendip* would not, however, be ready for sea in less than a month at the earliest, which month he would spend with his parents in the Isle of Wight.

A terrible month it proved. His father, being at Portsmouth, had a dispute—trifling or serious does not matter—which led to a bloody, fatal arbitrament. A meeting was arranged to take place forthwith on Southsea Common, and at the first fire Martin Frobisher fell to the ground stone-dead. His brain had been pierced by the adversary's pistol-bullet. The tragical catastrophe completely shattered Mrs. Frobisher's always trembling health. She was laid in the same grave with her husband, within three weeks after the mournful words "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," had been pronounced over him. Almost with her last breath she adjured her son never under any provocation to fight a duel. He gave that solemn promise without reluctance, for he had long since come to the resolution never for the avengement of a personal injury or insult to run the hazard of breaking into that holiest of holies, the tabernacle of human life.

Death claims his prey—Life its duties. Charles Frobisher was not one to neglect

them, and before the *Mendip* was quite ready for sea, he was in actual command of her. She had moored in the West India Docks, but was finally chartered for Lisbon. The cargo was a miscellaneous one, amongst which was about twenty barrels of gunpowder. In those days, when the agency of steam was only applied in an infinitesimal degree to marine transit, it was frequently the case that the government would pay highly remunerative sums for the conveyance of officers and others whom it was desirable to send off to foreign stations. In the instance of the *Mendip*, twelve cabin and thirty-four steerage berths had been secured. The cabin passengers were Augustus Mervyn, an attaché of the British embassy at the Portuguese Court; Lieutenant Burt, of the *Sibyl* sloop, in which Frobisher had served, and not long before recommissioned for the Mediterranean station; and six officers, with the wives of four of them, belonging to the Gibraltar garrison. The steerage passengers were soldiers, also bound for Gibraltar. There were with them eight women (wives) and their children. Total of passengers on board the *Mendip*, twenty-four men, twelve women, ten children. Her crew consisted of twenty men and boys. It was intended, after touching at Lisbon to go on to Gibraltar, whence Lieutenant Burt could easily find an opportunity to join his ship. This man had always been the bitter enemy of Charles Frobisher. There was a daily beauty in the young man's life which made his ugly. It was somewhat strange that these two should have again been thrown together under such changed circumstances.

The *Mendip* had dropped down the river, and anchored off Gravesend. Several of the cabin passengers, amongst them the attaché and his lady, had not embarked at London, and it was imperative to await their arrival. Lieutenant Burt and four of the military officers preferred to remain on shore during the ship's detention, Captain Frobisher promising to give them ample warning when the *Mendip* would lift anchor. They all five took up their quarters at the Royal Hotel: the ladies decided to remain on board. The next day the remaining two officers came off to the ship, and finding the attaché might perhaps make himself waited for some days longer, also went on shore and joined their comrades.

Augustus Mervyn, Esquire, having at

last put in an appearance, Captain Frobisher, who had some trifling business to transact in Gravesend, went himself on shore to apprise his passengers of that important fact, and that the *Mendip* would sail, wind and weather permitting, at an early hour the next day.

The officers were just sitting down to dinner when Captain Frobisher reached the Royal Hotel. Naturally he was invited to join them, and, being a man of social disposition, at once accepted the invitation. They were a frank, jovial party, with the exception of Lieutenant Burt, who looked more than usually gloomy, saturnine, repellent. He had been unlucky at play, and had lost, during the afternoon, a considerable sum of money. He was in a mood to quarrel for a straw.

The dinner, however, passed off quietly, but the wine had not been long in brisk circulation when the mask—a thin one—of courtesy which Burt had worn when casually spoken to by Charles Frobisher was flung rudely aside, and he addressed the captain of the *Mendip* in such language as no gentleman would use—none tamely submit to. Lieutenant Sutledge, who sent the story to the newspapers, does not mention what the insult precisely was which caused the final outbreak, and got the better of Captain Frobisher's temper, except that "it was a grievous, most exasperating insult." The reply to it was a glass of wine flung in the brutal fellow's face by the merchant captain.

In those days such an act would usually amongst gentlemen be followed by a duel. The officers present, though they had taken part with Captain Frobisher in the dispute, whatever it was, which provoked the outrage, felt there was no alternative. It was proposed that as the *Mendip* would weigh anchor early on the morrow, the affair should come off at once. Burt agreed, and one of the officers offered the loan of pistols, which the naval lieutenant accepted. A minute or two sufficed to restore Captain Frobisher's rarely disturbed self-possession.

"There will be no occasion for pistols," he calmly said. "I am no duellist, and shall certainly not fight Lieutenant Burt. He provoked me beyond bearing; but I was not justified, even for that, in throwing the wine in his face. I ask his pardon."

A shout of derisive scorn followed these words, high above which rang out the voice of Lieutenant Burt.

"I told you the fellow was a white-

livered poltroon—one of the most miserable cowards that ever disgraced his Majesty's uniform."

"Captain Frobisher," said the eldest of the officers, in a grave tone, "you must be jesting; you, who rank as lieutenant in the Royal Navy, refuse to give honourable satisfaction for the gross outrage which, under the impulse of sudden uncontrollable passion, no doubt, you have committed! Impossible! No apology in such a case can be accepted."

"I repeat that I am no duellist, and will not fight Lieutenant Burt," said Captain Frobisher, rising and putting on his hat. "I deeply regret, and again apologize, for having in a moment of anger forgotten myself. The *Mendip*," he added, "do not forget, will weigh anchor soon after dawn to-morrow. Good evening, gentlemen."

The officers came off in sufficient time, and shortly after the *Mendip* sailed, both wind and tide favouring. No one who observed the handling of his ship by Captain Frobisher could doubt that he was a hardy, skilful seaman, and the alacrity and cheerfulness with which his orders were carried out by the crew testified to their confidence in and respect for him.

Captain Frobisher presided, as was his right, at the cabin dinner. But his position must have been hard to bear: perhaps the sneering smiles of the ladies were the worst part of the infliction. The captain did not, however, betray any emotion. He was not likely to again lose his self-command.

Towards evening, the weather being fine and warm, with a gentle breeze blowing, the cabin passengers came on deck, and remained some time. The attaché and Lieutenant Burt, who were acquaintances, walked apart with each other, and Burt, excited by the wine he had drunk after dinner, indulged in open loud insult towards Frobisher, the attaché joining in the hilarious abuse. They were brought up with a round turn, and sharply. The lieutenant's glee was checked by a grip of steel upon his arm, accompanied by words which effectually put a stopper upon his mocking merriment—

"Lieutenant Burt, this is a merchant ship; I am absolute master on board—responsible only to her owners and the law; and I warn you once for all, I shall not speak twice upon the subject, that if you dare attempt, by word or gesture, to weaken my authority over the

crew and passengers, I will place you in irons, and keep you in irons till the end of the voyage. The same warning applies to you, Mr. Augustus Mervyn. I will not permit anyone in this ship, whatever his rank, to excite a spirit of contempt for me, and consequent insubordination amongst the crew. You are warned—be careful, or make up your mind to endure the penalty of your braggart insolence!"

This was spoken in a loud tone, so that all might hear; and as it was quite evident the captain meant what he said, there was no longer any fear that he would be again openly molested by his male passengers. They were quite aware that the use of language tending to excite disrespect towards the captain, would justify him, in a legal sense, for having recourse to the extreme measure which he had threatened. The ladies could not be so dealt with, and it was from the lips of their better halves that the officers launched the arrows of a thinly-veiled contemptuous irony.

The weather after the first few days grew stormy—storm gradually deepening into tempest; and the officers could not look without astonishment and admiration at the cool, active bravery displayed by Captain Frobisher in his battle with the hurricane. Whilst the tempest raged he was never, but for the briefest possible time, absent from the deck either night or day, and every especially perilous task which he directed to be done, he himself set the example of achieving it—leading, inspiring, as well as controlling his men. A revulsion of feeling towards the commander of the *Mendip* took place. It seemed that they must have mistaken the character of the man. They were destined to witness a yet stronger proof that a man may fear God, and not fear death.

During the tempest two out of the four ship's boats had been stove-in. This was an uneasiness to Captain Frobisher, who had endeavoured to procure another boat before sailing, there being seventy human beings on board; but for some unexplained reason he had not succeeded. The two remaining boats could not by possibility hold all, and who could say at any moment the boats might not be the sole refuge of the passengers and crew! Those who go down to the sea in ships are ever encompassed by peril—peril sudden, unforeseen! At Lisbon, Captain Frobisher could obtain a full complement of boats,

and when the storm had gone down, the *Mendip* was not more than fifty miles from the mouth of the Tagus; the danger of the voyage was over. Alas! it had not begun.

The night was calm, still, scarcely a breath of air stirred the surface of the water; the firmament was fretted with golden stars. Captain Frobisher was in his cabin writing, when a cry of "Fire! fire!" rang through the ship. Frobisher was on deck in an instant of time, and immediately dived below. How the fire originated was never ascertained, but the hold was a mass of flame, to attempt extinguishing which would be simply absurd—death, in fact, to all on board. Ten minutes, at the most, the captain reckoned would elapse before the fire reached the powder-barrels, and all would be over. "He had, I rejoice to believe," says the writer of the narrative, "a better opinion of me than of most others on board; and when I, starting out of my berth at the dread summons and hurrying upon deck, met him as he emerged from the hold, he whispered—'Ten minutes, not more, depend upon it, is given us to save the women and the children. Go and bid the ladies dress themselves in all haste. I will attend to the steerage passengers. Now, men,' he added, in tones as calm as if he were calling them to a banquet.—'now, men, be steady, smart. Let fall the boats in just no time. No panic, no hurry, but be smart as well as steady.' 'Ay, ay, sir,' was the response of the men who drew hope and courage from the captain's composure. 'Ay, ay, sir.'

"In a few minutes the deck was crowded by the terror-stricken passengers, most of them screaming, praying, in all the wildness of panic-fear; his nobleness the attaché conspicuous amongst them all for an abjectness of fear which caused him to forget he had a wife on board. 'Captain,' he screamed, stammered, 'the government will hold you responsible for my safety. I am the bearer of despatches that—'

"Hold your tongue, sir. Where is your lady?—we shall save *her* if possible. We must take our chance—a poor one I am afraid. Better try to remember some prayer that I suppose even your mother must have taught you, than to scream and gesticulate after that frantic, foolish fashion."

"The boats were by this time alongside, and the crews in them. 'Men,'

said Captain Frobisher, 'it is our first duty to save the women and the children.'

"Ay, ay, sir—and you—we must save you.'

"That depends upon God's will. What I wish you to distinctly understand is, that no man or boy is allowed to enter the boats till every woman and child are safe in them. Hold on with your boat-hooks, and should any man attempt to precede them, drop the selfish coward into the water.'

"Ay, ay, sir—never fear.'

"The women must each take a child upon her knee. Now then, be smart and steady.'

"Under the influence of the captain's order to his crew, and the certainty that they would obey it, the embarkation of the ladies, the wives of the private soldiers, and the children was safely and swiftly accomplished.

"Now then for as many of us as the boats will float. Back, sir," he shouted to the attaché, who rushed forward to be the first *man* saved. 'Back. Age before rank, if you please. Here, you gray-haired veteran,' he added, speaking to a sergeant, 'it is your first turn.'

The transfer from the mined hot deck went on rapidly. Lieutenant Burt, who could not be less than fifty, rather hung back than pressed forward; actuated, I suppose, by an indefinite feeling of shame and remorse.

A much younger man stepped forward before him. 'No sir; wait a minute, if you please. Lieutenant Burt, it is your turn.'

"Was ever insult, contumely, more nobly avenged?

"God bless you, sir," gasped Burt; 'God bless you. You are a glorious fellow, and I a miserable fool; but—'

"This is no time for words, sir. Now then."

"I was the last who embarked, and there were seven of the youngest men still standing on the deck of the doomed ship, the attaché one of them, though he could scarcely support himself, when a preliminary explosion in the hold warned Captain Frobisher that not one moment must be lost, if the people in the boats were to have a chance of life.

"Cast off!" he shouted, 'and pull for your lives. You have barely, very barely, time to save them.'

"We will save you, captain," shouted the crew. 'We must and will save you.'

"No, my lads, that is impossible. The captain must be the last man to leave his ship. Push off, I say, at once, and pull vigorously, or all will perish. Begone, and God bless you all."

"The oars fell into the water, the men pulled with a will, and not, as that heroic man warned us, not a moment too soon. We were not more than fifty yards from the ship when the *Mendip* blew up with a tremendous explosion. The boats rocked fearfully, and it was God's mercy that some of the spars or other timber of the

ship, which from an immense height fell into the water, did not strike and sink one or both the boats.

"As soon as we could breathe, we endeavoured, but without hope, to ascertain if any of the unfortunates left on board had by some miraculous accident been saved, and still floated. Not one! The remorseless sea had devoured all.

"For ourselves, we reached the Tagus in about six hours, and when landed at Lisbon our troubles and dangers were at an end."

PARLOUR OCCUPATIONS.

GILDING AND BRONZING PLASTER CASTS.

AN improved and more educated taste has, of late years, called for, and produced, plaster copies of many of the most celebrated statues and pieces of sculpture. The eye is no longer offended by stiff gaudily-coloured figures of some popular hero, glaring fruits of impossible hues, piled in ugly baskets, hideous monsters intended for cats, dogs, &c., and parrots as bright and gay as green, blue, red, and yellow could make them. No! now-a-days the Italian hawker has a board covered with graceful vases and pretty statuettes all in pure white, simple, pleasing, and artistic. But all things bright will fade, and the pure white we so admire in our cherished casts soon becomes "sicklied o'er" with a yellow-brownish tinge of dust and smoke, and they cease to be as fair to view and as ornamental, and regrettably we depose them from their posts of honour, and banish them to dark corners, or consign them to the lumber-room. With a very little pains and at a trifling expense plaster casts may be made to do duty for more expensive articles of decoration.

Without further preamble we will proceed to business; viz., to gild a bracket. Most of our readers are probably aware that plaster is of an eminently porous, absorbent nature; this fault must be cured before we can attempt to gild with any prospect of success. Half a

pint of olive oil and a pledget of tow, or a piece of sponge tied to the end of a stick, must be prepared, and the cast laid on an old tray or something that will not spoil. The tow or sponge is to be immersed in the oil and then daubed over the cast so as to coat it plentifully with oil; in a couple of hours every drop of this will be absorbed, and the operation must be repeated again, and then again and again, until the plaster is tolerably saturated and ceases to absorb so rapidly and greedily; it must then be left in a dry place for four and twenty hours. Dissolve a piece of patent soluble size, of the bigness of an egg, in two table-spoonfuls of hot water, and when it is perfectly fluid, with a soft brush lay a thin and even coating of it over the whole surface of the bracket. Again leave it to dry. Then have ready japanner's gold-size, a couple of books of gold-leaf, and a couple of full, soft brushes. Interleave the books of gold-leaf with tissue paper, so that each sheet of that mobile substance shall have paper on either side of it, as thus alone it is possible to cut it and lift it without sad waste.

When the bracket is perfectly dry, coat a portion of it evenly and not too thickly with the gold size, and when that is nearly dry, which will, under ordinary circumstances, be in about ten minutes, apply the gold-leaf, cutting it previously into

pieces of the requisite size, or laying it on where practicable by the page, and lifting it on the paper, or by means of a gilder's tip, an implement which can be obtained at any colourman's.

The patent soluble size, and the gold-size for this work, may both be bought at an ordinary oil and colourman's; a penny-worth of the former, and sixpenny-worth of the latter, will be amply sufficient for a pair of brackets. The gold-leaf should be got at a gold-beater's.

Having carefully gilded the whole of the bracket, sweep off all superfluous bits with a clean, dry, soft brush, and burnish portions here and there, with a hook-shaped pebble or agate burnisher. This is a manipulation requiring much care; it should not be attempted until the gilding is perfectly dry and set, and then the touch must be gentle, even, and continuous, and no pressure or weight of hand applied. After this the work may be considered as complete, but those who prize durability above brilliancy of effect may still varnish the whole over with thin copal varnish: this will bear washing and rubbing, and last for years.

In bronzing we begin, as in gilding, by destroying the porosity of the plaster, and, having done that, we size it in the manner already described.

Bronze-powder is sold by the ounce at artists'-colour repositories; there are two kinds, the red or coppery, and the yellow or brassy bronze-powder; the latter is generally preferred, but it is a matter of taste. This powder must be put into a coarse muslin bag, or it may be taken up with a large, dry, soft brush, and so dusted over the work. But we are proceeding too fast, and must retrograde a step.

When the size has been laid on and is quite dry, the bracket, or cast, must be painted over with a dark olive-green paint, mixed as if for house-painting. Let this stand in a dry place for some hours, and when it has ceased to be wet, but still remains moist, dust it lightly over with bronze-powder, letting the powder fall but scantily where there are to be shadows, and shaking it over thickly to produce the lights and metallic effects. Of course, nothing—that is, no finger, or bag, or brush—must touch the surface of the work during this operation; it is the powder only which must fall on it, and the eye will enable the operator to judge when enough of this has been shed over it. The cast must afterwards stand until

the whole is thoroughly dry, and then be polished, rubbing bronze-powder into it with a soft, perfectly dry silk handkerchief, and then dusted quite clean. It is now finished, and if properly done, will have a very handsome effect; but, as we before observed, it may be varnished with copal varnish, by those who desire more durability. Animals, large figures, busts, and brackets and vases look well bronzed as ornaments for a hall or library, and if carefully done may often pass for the metal itself.

Those who have the eye and taste of an artist, may often materially beautify a plaster-cast by working it up, smoothing off inequalities, rounding edges, bringing out carved work, &c.; a Dutch-reed and some fine emery-paper will, if properly used, frequently work wonders. A word of advice, too, we would give to those who care sufficiently for these works of art take trouble about them. Do not buy of the hawkers, but go to the gallery or *atelier* of some of the Italian modelers, and there make your selection; and if you would have a good cast of the copy of any piece of sculpture, buy it as soon as it appears, while the mould in which it is cast retains all its sharpness and truth of outline, and has not begun to become worn and ragged.

Plaster may be coloured to resemble old oak very easily.

Saturate it with oil, then size it twice, and rub down asphaltum in a saucer with a few drops of spirits-of-wine, and water enough to reduce it to a moderately fluid state—from a teaspoonful to a tablespoonful of water ought to be amply sufficient. Lay this on with a full, soft brush, not in an even surface of colour, but in lights and shadows,—here light brown, there darker, and in another place quite dark,—in order to give effect to the moulding of the cast, and also to simulate the hues of the carved wood we wish it to resemble. When it has been coloured thus, and the colouring is perfectly dry, it must be varnished in order to give it the requisite polish, and indeed when the copal varnish is thin, should be varnished twice. It is then completed, and will wash and wear any length of time. All the materials for this process—and enough of them to do a considerable amount of work—may be obtained at any oil and colourman's for less than eighteen-pence.

Plaster casts may be painted white or in colours. Vases or figures intended for

the decoration of gardens, or for exposure to weather, should always be painted, for the action of the atmosphere on them is otherwise such that they gradually crumble to pieces.

For out-door purposes, the paints commonly used by house-painters are the best, and white, stone-colour, and dark olive, or bottle-green, the most useful and enduring. The casts should be oiled and then sized, and afterwards painted; also the inside and the part on which they stand must not be forgotten, if we would have them durable.

Bronze vases, or white vases with gilt handles, or picked out with gilding, have a very good effect; or gilding may be applied to the mouldings of bronzed or oak-coloured brackets with advantage.

The graceful plaster pedestals, or semi-columns, which we so often see, may, if fluted, be painted in alternate stripes of white and gold; or, if the surface is smooth, with a medallion or raised carved-work on either side, the ground might be bronzed, and the work brought out in gilding.

Should it be deemed desirable to paint smaller statuettes or casts in colours, the oil-paints sold in tubes ready prepared will be found the best for the purpose; but this will rarely be the case, for a combination of colours, on anything resembling sculpture, would be inappropriate, and an offence against good taste, unity of tint being the characteristic of all works of art of this class; and our object is not to degrade our plaster models into gaudy meretricious monstrosities, but to make them look like something better

even than they appear, and give to them a more useful and durable surface.

Various methods of giving to plaster casts the appearance of marble have been suggested,—amongst others, the immersing them in hot, melted, white wax for some time; but unless the cast, when taken out, be kept in a sufficiently hot temperature to maintain the wax in a fluid state until entirely absorbed by the plaster, an unequal ugly surface would be produced, which no manipulation could polish. The only process which we have found to answer at all is, to heat the cast gradually to a temperature higher than we could bear to touch with the finger, and having ready some white wax, melted to a perfect fluidity, to drop it very slowly on the heated cast, giving the plaster time to absorb one drop before we let another fall on the same place. But this is a very tedious and disagreeable process, for the heat of the fire before which it must be done, and the smell of the wax, and the risk of burning or scalding the hands, all combine to annoy, and most certainly the effect produced is not worth the pains bestowed.

The lather of shaving-soap will produce a smooth pearly-white surface, if laid over a plaster-cast thickly, and suffered to remain for ten minutes, and then wiped off with a very soft handkerchief. This operation must not, however, be repeated more than twice or thrice, or it will spoil the cast, instead of cleansing it; and it is not durable in its effects, nor do we recommend it for general purposes so cordially as we can the bronzing.

THE SADDLE WITH A RED LINING.

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF CROMWELL.

"RUFUS, where are you going?"

"Not far, my little sister."

"I didn't ask the distance. I inquired where you were going," she replied, with a slight show of petulance.

"Well, Mabel, if you must know, I am going to the inn called the Crown and Anchor."

"That's in London?"

"Yes."

"A long ride for so late an hour—so dark and rainy, too."

"It is only two hours' ride. I shall be there by nine o'clock."

"Better say midnight. It is so dark you can't see your hand before you;" and as Mabel spoke, she drew aside the curtain of an open window.

"I can trust to my good steed's eyes. They are keen enough to penetrate darkness too thick for yours or mine."

"What if you should encounter one of the king's troopers? I've heard that one rides the same road to-night."

"Who is it?"

"I didn't ask," she replied, evasively.

"One of Cromwell's Ironsides ought not to be much frightened to meet even two of them. Besides, the darkness will prove a protection, were any needed."

"I wish, Rufus Knollys, that you were on the king's side, instead of Cromwell's. Our father little thought, when he gave you his dying blessing, that it was bestowed on a son who would prove disloyal to his king."

"Were our father alive, dear Mabel, he would, as I have good reason to believe, think and act as I do. The king, by his tyranny, has brought this trouble on himself."

"Oh, my brother, how can you say so?"

Rufus Knollys made no reply to this, but hastened to belt his heavy horseman's coat around his waist. Then, telling her that she must not look for his return till near night on the following day, he kissed her, and left the room. He had been gone only a few minutes, when there was a low rap at a door opposite that by which he had made his egress.

"Is it you, Everard?" said Mabel, going up close to the door, but without opening it.

"Yes. Let me in; I must see you a minute."

She hastened to unfasten the door.

"Is your brother at home?" he inquired, before he ventured to cross the threshold.

"No; he is gone."

"That's fortunate, for I've a favour to ask, which he must know nothing about."

"What is it?"

"You shall see."

He stepped back a little, and taking up a saddle which was lying on the floor, brought it into the room.

"Why do you bring your saddle in here?" asked Mabel.

"Get your scissors, needle and thread—mind that the thread be strong—and I will tell you."

Mabel did as he desired, and Everard, placing the saddle on the table, directed her to rip a few inches of a seam in the lining of one of the flaps. This done, he produced a little packet, secured by a band of silk floss, and placed it carefully—almost reverentially—inside the opening thus made.

"Now, Mabel," said he, "this seam must be reclosed so nicely that no one, on examining it, would suspect it had been ripped open. I know of no other fingers in the world that I would trust to do it;" and as he finished speaking, he raised her white hand to his lips, and kissed it again and again.

"How do you expect that I'm going to obey you?" said Mabel, laughing, and trying to withdraw her hand.

"I certainly have no reason to expect it," he replied, laughing in his turn, and releasing the imprisoned hand. "But you don't ask me a single question. Have you no curiosity to know whom the letter is from, nor whom it is for?" he inquired, as, guided by her nimble fingers, the shining needle glanced in and out of the red cloth lining.

"Certainly I have. I'm a true daughter of Eve in that respect. But you know, Everard, I can keep a secret."

"Yes, I do know it, and I run no risk in telling you that the letter is from King Charles to Henrietta his queen, who, as you know, is now in France. It must

be at the Crown and Anchor to-night."

"And are you going to carry it there?"

"Yes. I shall stop there a few hours, till all have retired to rest, when I shall proceed to Dover."

"Are you aware that the Crown and Anchor is where my brother is going to-night?"

"No. What is he going for? Do you know?"

"I do not. He wasn't inclined to be communicative."

"Something urgent, or he wouldn't have undertaken the journey this dark, dismal night."

"Oh, Everard, if it should have anything to do with this letter of the king's."

"It hasn't, Mabel—it hasn't."

"There's fear and distrust in your voice, which contradict your words."

"The fear and distrust exist only in your imagination, dear Mabel. My errand to-night was known to no one except to the king, and to me, his humble messenger, till I took you into my confidence."

"I hope you don't repent having done so?"

"As I have already said, I know that I can trust you."

"If you could not trust the daughter of one of the noblest of men, and the best and most gentle of women, she would be unworthy her parentage;" and while tears sprang to her eyes at the thought of those so dear, now no more, a glow of conscious pride overspread her countenance. After a little silence, Mabel again spoke. "You say that, besides the king, you and I are all that know about the letter?"

"Yes."

"I'm afraid not."

"Who else can know about it?"

"Oliver Cromwell and Rufus Knollys."

"That is impossible. The king delivered the letter into my own hands, not another soul being present."

"Know you not that walls have ears, and that the birds of the air carry the matter? The more I think of it, the more certain I am that Cromwell and my brother know all about that letter."

"You must be mistaken."

"No, I am *not* mistaken. A word or two dropped by Rufus, which to me had no meaning at the time, seems plain as day now. The work you have in hand will bring you into trouble."

"Your fears make a coward of you.

At any rate, danger or no danger, I must redeem my promise to the king, and it is time I were gone."

"If you must go, it is, and do not forget to be wary and watchful."

"Trust me for that. Good-night, dear Mabel."

"Good-night, Everard, and God be with you."

"And with you."

"He alone knows how much I need his sustaining hand," thought Mabel, as she stood at the door while Everard passed out. "My brother for Cromwell, and another, as dear as he, for the king."

The blood mounted to her cheeks, as this last thought passed through her mind, for she felt that Everard Corby was dearer even than the brother she loved so well.

When Rufus Knollys arrived at the inn of the Crown and Anchor, instead of entering the large, untidy room, already well filled with travellers of various descriptions, he sought the landlord, whom he took aside. A few words having passed between them in an undertone, the host conducted him to a small apartment in the back part of the building.

"You are certain that no one dressed as a trooper has arrived here this evening?" said Knollys.

"I am," replied the landlord.

"If one or more should come dressed thus, let me know."

"I will."

"I must also know the result of the search you make for the saddle as soon possible. You remember the description I gave you?"

"I do."

After being absent fifteen or twenty minutes, the landlord returned.

"There isn't, among the whole number, a single saddle with a red lining," he said.

"Then the owner hasn't yet come. Watch, for he must soon be here."

"If you could only tell me the name of him you are expecting, it might assist me in my search."

"Not knowing it myself, I cannot tell it to you; but I *do* know that the destiny of the country, for weal or woe, may depend on my having possession of the saddle. The reason *why*, it is of no moment for you to know. You may be certain, however, that the Crown and Anchor will soon have another host, if, through negligence, you fail to perform the duty I require of you. Go, now, and be sure

to make good use of your eyes. Examine the saddle of every traveller who may arrive."

At this moment the sharp clatter of a horse's feet was heard in the paved court which led to the stables.

"I think the right one has come," said Knollys. "It seemed to me that there was apprehension as well as haste in the very ring of the iron-shod hoofs of the animal he rode, as if a nervous, unsteady hand held the bridle. Why do you wait? Go, and if the saddle have a red lining, watch your opportunity, and bring it to me."

Ten, twenty, thirty minutes elapsed, and Knollys, chafing at the delay, was walking his room with quick, impatient steps, when there was a rap at his door. It was the landlord.

"Here is a saddle with a red lining," said he, "and I hope it may be the right one."

"I can determine *that*," replied Knollys. "The owner didn't see you with it, I trust?"

"Indeed he did. He told me to bring it from the stable, or let some one do it for me, and carry it to the room where he was to lodge, and where he wished to have a fire, so as to dry his clothes, and the saddle, too, which he said was damp; so I brought it round this way, that you might have a look at it."

"I must have it here to myself, as long as I find it necessary."

"If it can only be in the young man's room, by the time he has finished supper—"

"No matter whether it be there or not."

The landlord began saying something about losing customers, which was cut short by a somewhat imperious intimation on the part of Knollys, that he wished to be alone. As soon as the landlord had withdrawn, he carefully fastened the door, and made himself certain that the one small window was so completely veiled, that no prying eyes from without could see into the room. The pressure of his fingers on the yielding lining of the saddle soon detected the spot where the packet was concealed, and the seam so carefully closed only a short time previous by his sister, was rudely torn open by a dull pocket-knife. With lips compressed, and with a light in his eyes expressive of more satisfaction than he was willing to own even to himself—for he murmured, half aloud, "It is, after all, a

cruel piece of business"—he took it from its hiding place, and lost no time in depositing it in a safe place about his person. This was scarcely effected when he heard the voice of the landlord at the door. Before admitting him, he hastily smoothed down the edges of the seam, made rough and jagged by the rude haste by which it had been torn apart.

"It is ready for you," said Knollys, handing the landlord the saddle. He took it, but to the surprise of Knollys, he entered the room, closing the door behind him. He assumed a mysterious—somewhat important air, as he said in words scarce above a whisper, "He has come."

"Who has come?"

"He that you asked about, who you said would be dressed as a trooper. I left him in the tap-room, drinking beer, but his doing so didn't deceive *me*, though it may others. I've seen Oliver Cromwell before to-night."

"How dare you say it is he? You are mistaken."

"I am not mistaken. I know him as well as my own brother. He has that in his looks—a kind of dignity—an air of command, I should call it—which a trooper's dress nor no other dress could hide from me, let me see him where I would."

"Was he aware that you knew him?"

"Yes, I took care of that part of the business."

"What did he say?"

"He clapped me on the shoulder, and said to me that he hoped I had a thriving business; but let it be ever so thriving, he added, he was free to promise that it should be more so, if I would go with those who are in the right, by following the leadings of Providence. I felt moved to pour out my thanks in liberal measures, but he stopped me by a sign, and then said that he wished to have a room by himself, and to have one Master Knollys, a young gentleman of great trust and consideration, who he knew was then at the inn, come to him forthwith. Who else besides the great Cromwell would have the sense and discernment he manifested, especially when he told me that he was free to promise that my business—"

"Yes, yes—it is Cromwell. You are not mistaken. I am ready to go to him," said Knollys, cutting him short in his speech.

Thus constrained, the landlord, carry-

ing the saddle in one hand and a candle in the other, preceded Knollys a considerable distance along a narrow corridor, when he stopped, pointed to a door on the right, and then kept on, first saying in a whisper that the young chap that owned the saddle was to lodge at the extremity of the passage.

"Come in," was the response to the three raps by Knollys on the door.

Cromwell came forward to meet him as he entered. He grasped the young man by the hand, and looked him full in the face, without speaking. Then there was a sudden lighting up of his countenance, displacing the look of doubt which had before clouded it.

"You have the letter—let me see it," were his words.

Knollys answered by placing it in his hand.

"To Henrietta, Queen of England," traced, as he knew, by the hand of Charles himself, was written on the parchment which enclosed the missive, deemed so important. His eye rested on the superscription a minute or more, while in the meantime he passed his hand lightly and caressingly over the shining silken band which secured the envelope, for he recalled to mind the romantic feelings of the lover, as manifested when he wooed and won the handsome, fascinating Henrietta of France for his bride.

"Many years have since passed away," said he, speaking to himself rather than to Knollys, "and yet the sentiments of the lover, after the example of many, are not in his case sunk in those of the indifferent husband." Then turning to Knollys, he said—"No one has loved Charles Stuart better than I, and this is almost like rending one of my own heart-strings, but Providence and necessity have cast it upon me."

As he finished speaking, with a dagger he wore at his side, he cut asunder the band which bound the letter. But the softened look which had crept over his countenance, gave place to one of stern, relentless determination while he read. He neither spoke nor looked up till he had a second time perused the letter. He then handed the letter to Knollys, as he did so, designating a particular passage. It read thus:—

"The silken cord you speak of sending for the neck of him who apes *royalty*, will be received as a token of my dear queen's *loyalty*. It is a distinction which

we can afford to allow him, and one which will beget no annoyance to our friends. What is better still, if my expectations do not deceive me, the cord will be needed at no distant day, as you will see by the following details."

"Charles does not bear in mind the lesson your cavalry—rightly named Iron-sides—taught him at Marston Moor," remarked Knollys, as he returned the letter.

"He thinks," remarked Cromwell, quietly, all appearance of displeasure having vanished—"he thinks that the power is in the hands of the Parliament, but I will tell you, knowing that I can depend on your discretion, that the army, now taught to know their own strength at Naseby as well as at Marston Moor, are in reality the masters."

"And the army, though it knows it not," said Knollys, smiling, "is entirely subject to your control."

"What is contained in this letter," said Cromwell, "urges me on, as with a spur, to do what I would willingly leave undone, for I now find that the king, who I know is a very able man, is withal a great dissembler—one in whom no trust can be reposed."

"Will it be well to lose sight of the messenger who brought this letter?" inquired Knollys.

"No; care must be taken of that. Who is he?"

"I don't know his name—neither does the landlord."

"Whoever he is the king deems him a trustworthy servant. See that he doesn't make his escape."

Everard Corby, when he had finished supper, was conducted to the room which had been prepared for him. He was well pleased with his accommodations. A brisk fire was burning on the hearth, and his thick overcoat saturated with rain was so placed as to feel its influence. What he considered of far greater moment, the saddle which he believed was the repository of the information which, if taken advantage of, might conduce to the welfare of the king, was near at hand.

Sleep was not to be thought of, for soon after midnight he must resume his journey, there being no other messenger who could be trusted to deliver the letter into the care of Queen Henrietta's faithful servant, who was awaiting his arrival. He dozed a little as he sat before the fire, but his slumbers were uneasy, and more than once he imagined that he heard the voice

of Mabel warning him against some impending danger.

Nearly an hour passed thus, when he awoke with a start, and going to a window looked out. The rain had ceased, and broken masses of dark, wild-looking clouds were driven by a brisk wind across the midnight sky. Having made himself ready for his journey, he took up the saddle, but on attempting to open the door, he found it barred against him.

"What does this mean?" he thought, at the same time making another and more vigorous effort to open the door, as he imagined some accidental obstruction might have defeated his first attempt. Yes, he was a prisoner—there was no doubt of that. As he turned from the door, the saddle caught his eye. He snatched it up, turned the lining to the light, and beheld the opened seam.

"I have been robbed," he involuntarily exclaimed, and the saddle dropped from his nerveless hands. Then, in an instant, the disastrous events, the untold misery it might bring to the king marshalled themselves before him in dark array, threatening to prostrate and overwhelm him. Finally, his own situation presented itself to his mind. He knew that in all probability his life would be the sacrifice demanded as the only expiation deemed commensurate with his offence. Well, would it not be noble, heroic, to lose his life in the service of the king? These and other similar thoughts rose in quick succession. Then the fair form of Mabel Knollys presented itself before him, bringing with it many a pictured scene of happiness, and reviving in all its intensity that love of life natural to a young man of his age. His heroism, and that feeling of self-abandonment which at first had made him think himself willing to lose his life in the king's service were fast fading away, and at last he sank into a state of despondency. He was roused by the entrance of two men, one of whom put his hand on his shoulder, and told him he was his prisoner.

Three days had passed away, when Mabel Knollys met her brother at the door, and told him that Everard Corby was a prisoner, under sentence of death.

"I know it," was his answer.

"And did not tell me!"

"My poor little sister, I thought you would know it soon enough."

"Oh, Rufus, he might have been saved. Now it may be too late."

"No, Mabel, he could not. I have

seen Cromwell myself, and I pleaded with him as I would for the life of a brother."

"And he wouldn't listen to you?"

"No."

"I always thought Oliver Cromwell was cruel—now I know it."

"No, not cruel; he would willingly save Everard's life, but his offence is of the gravest kind. If he had been successful in what he undertook, the life of Cromwell would have been endangered. I love Everard, but his life is of little importance compared with that of Cromwell."

"How can you say so?"

"There is no time now to explain my reasons for saying so, but you have the sense to know that individual interests must yield to those of a whole people."

"It will do the people no good for Everard to die; and I will save him, or perish in the attempt."

"Mabel, what do you mean?"

"Just what I say."

"Dear sister, you don't realize what you say."

"Yes, I do. I have said that Oliver Cromwell is cruel; still he is not heartless. If what I have heard is true, he has been moved and melted to mercy more than once by the tears and prayers of Mrs. Claypole, his favourite daughter. If I live, God helping me, I will see her this very day, and you must go with me."

"Certainly, if you will go, I will go with you; but let me again tell you it will be of no avail."

"I shall at least have one consolation. I shall not be obliged to reproach myself with leaving undone anything I could do to save him."

It was late in the evening when Mabel and her brother arrived at the house at that time the residence of Oliver Cromwell. Rufus remained at the outer door, to speak with some friend he met there, while Mabel was ushered into a room whose sole occupant was a lady with a sweet face and gentle mien. After a few pleasant words of welcome, she relapsed into silence. Mabel sat two or three minutes, hoping that she would say something. To sit thus was no longer supportable. She arose and approached her, but when she attempted to speak, her voice broke into sobs, so that the question, "Are you Mrs. Claypole, the daughter of Cromwell?" was scarcely intelligible.

"I am," was the answer; and the lady, putting her arm around her, gently drew her towards her, and caused her to sit by her side. Mabel soon grew more calm, enabling her to command her voice.

"I have come," said she, "to ask of your father the life of one who was the playmate of my childhood, and has always been a dear friend."

"I think you mean Everard Corby."

"I do."

A look of doubt and perplexity overshadowed Mrs. Claypole's countenance. Mabel was quick to see it.

"You think there's no hope?" said she.

"I will not say that," replied Mrs. Claypole, "though I must say that the chances are against the young man. But nothing is more painful than suspense. Come with me."

Mrs. Claypole arose, and taking Mabel by the hand, told her to lean on her arm, for the poor girl trembled so that she could hardly stand. They crossed the apartment, a door was thrown open, and then Mabel knew that she stood in the presence of Cromwell.

"My daughter," said he, "whom have you brought with you?"

"That is for her to tell," was the answer.

The next moment, unconscious of any volition on her part, Mabel found herself

at Cromwell's feet, pleading as only those can plead who feel that the life or death of the one held dearest depends on what they say. Mrs. Claypole wept freely, but Cromwell, though he more than once wiped the moisture from his eyes, did not relent.

"He must die!" said he. "It would be working against a clear manifestation of Providence to pardon him."

"Say not so, my father," said his daughter, kneeling by Mabel's side. "Grant to this sorrowing maiden the privilege of telling Everard Corby that he is free. Grant it freely, my dear father; for, as some lines written by one Will Shakespeare say:—

"The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven,
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blest;
It blesses him that gives and him that takes."

There was a sweetness in her voice and looks, a graceful humility in her attitude, that her father could not withstand.

"What you ask is granted," said he, and extending a hand to each of the suppliants, he bade them rise. It is scarcely necessary to add that in less than an hour afterward Everard Corby was released from prison. And what is more, from that hour Cromwell had another able supporter.

WANDERING STARS.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BENEVOLENT GENTLEMAN IN BLACK.

WHEN he quitted that grim, quiet house, the individual of dark habiliments and benevolent purposes went straight back to the Golden Eagle. To some persons this would seem rather an incautious proceeding, but he knew better; with righteous boldness he would beard the lion in his den, yea even the proprietor of Pandemonium. Into Mr. Trot's presence he was shown forthwith—the other parent was abroad seeking their daughter.

"I have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Trot, I presume," exclaimed the visitor with an insinuating smile. "Ah, my worthy friend, if you but knew the anxiety I have felt on the subject that has passed between us—I mean the letters—you understand."

"Oh, you be Paul Flook, then," growled Trot, rising out of his chair and looking hard at the benevolent gentleman.

"I am, Mr. Trot," he replied, with another of those sly smiles; "and you are the father of our little—ha! ha!—shall I say our charge?"

"And my wife," added the father, "would make you look a piece more serious if she saw you at this moment. Wot have you been and a done with the girl, eh? Here's Provinda a rampaging up and down, and a threatening and swearing awful."

Mr. Flook then sitting down, condescended to explain, by aid of his two fingers over the left palm, how Miss Trot had accompanied him, quite of her own accord, to the house of the kind-hearted lady who had promised to provide her education; and then he dwelt with great unction on the happy, blessed state of mind in which she had accepted that lady's hospitality, and how she had begged to be allowed to remain there, and could not be prevailed upon to return to the hotel. Lastly, he delicately pointed out the near approach of the term, and the importance of Miss Trout being taken to the school immediately, lest some more fortunate young lady should forestall her in this much-prized distinction. To this argument Trot listened without any great

manifestation of feeling, only nodding his head at the end of each sentence.

"Well," he remarked, as Flook fired his last shot, "I wont say nothink noways, but there's Provi to be considered. I'm sure no one knows what she may have to say to it."

All doubts on this point were speedily dissipated by the abrupt entrance of a middle-aged woman, with coarse though rather handsome features, and an impatient, excited manner.

"Well, I can hear nothing of her," she cried, without at first noticing the stranger. "But, hey! ho! what's this? Why, bless me if it's not the very identical villain as stole my precious little girl! You did! you did, sir! Not a word! Give me back my child! Give me! give me! oh! oh!"

Trot, with surprising alacrity, leaped up and pushed a bottle to her mouth, after which a gurgling sound was distinctly audible in her throat, her eyes revolved wildly, and a remarkable odour of rum was perceived. He next proceeded to slap her neck and arms, which had the effect of cutting short the hysterical symptoms. During this period of suspense, Mr. Flook watched those strange proceedings with a self-possession truly edifying, while a sweet smile played over his ruby-tinted countenance.

"Don't sit there a mocking me, sir," were the first expressed tokens of the lady's return to consciousness, accompanied by a peculiar movement of her fingers, as if impatient to write her feelings in strong characters on his face.

"Stop! gently, Provi! gently, ho! Be composed, dear, and hear what the gentleman has to say; he has told me all the partiklers afore you came—it's all right."

Upon hearing this, Provi again went off in short cries of "My child! my child!" but finding this display of maternal feeling, however interesting, yet leading to nothing very satisfactory, she came round and expressed her willingness to hear the worst. On this, Paul Flook commenced a recapitulation of his story, only introducing some slight embellishments, as more suitable for his hearer, such as, "After partaking of a light and elegant repast, the dear child had insisted on

visiting the lady," and more to the same purpose. When Provinda had heard this and gone over it once or twice in her mind, she seemed more composed and less eager to pluck out the good man's eyes or to rend his righteous person, though, as he himself afterwards admitted before Mrs. Pegfoot's committee, "I verily trembled and shook, fearing that my garments would be torn."

"The young person's raiment," he continued, "will be provided by her excellent benefactress; her present changes of apparel will be replaced by some more suitable. We shall leave for Slapham to-morrow."

Having discharged his mission, he rose to go, smiling blandly on the parents, as with blank faces they watched him glide from the room. The mother, however, suddenly sprang after him, exclaiming, "I must see her before she goes. Can I call this evening?" The Pegfoot plenipotentiary shook his head in a gentle, dissuasive manner—

"We will call here," he said, "to-morrow, on our way to the station."

At an early hour the next morning, Paul Flook, with Bertha under his sable wing, and accompanied by Miss Pegfoot's maid, alighted from a cab, and made the best of their way to the platform of the Great Western Railway, where they waited a short while till the train came rushing in, glaring with red-hot eyes, and sneezing a scalding sneeze, as it panted to be off again. Here was a bustle. Guards, police, porters, fat gentlemen, thin gentlemen, tall persons, short persons, old parties, young parties.—Mr. Flook, Miss Trot, and the maid helplessly entangled in the midst. Clang! clang! clang! went the bell. "All take your seats!" cried the guard. Screech! shrieked the engine.

"Here, take this with you," said the servant girl, pushing a thick, soft parcel through the carriage window.

"Eh, my dear!" whispered Flook, pushing his head forward; "are they ham or beef?"

"Ham!" she replied, as the train moved off.

"Ah!" he said, with a smile, "bad for young people, very bad!"

And so off they went. Paul closed his eyes and composed himself in a comfortable position, musing as he did so on the astonishment and possible indignation of Bertha's parents that he had not called. While he thus meditated, he

chuckled softly to himself like a man in a happy dream, and then slumbered again. By and by, they neared Swindon, and, as though by a mysterious instinct, Mr. Flook put his hand stealthily into the soft, thick bundle, and abstracted something which he rapidly consumed, holding it close to his mouth. This phenomenon was repeated exactly six times, the parcel after each act growing thinner and lighter, till on the last application it collapsed and disappeared through the window in the form of a greasy paper bag. When this was done, he looked at his watch, and arriving the same minute at the station, raised himself to as near a perpendicular as the peculiar construction of the carriage permitted, and brushing something like crumbs out of his waistcoat, desired Bertha, rather sharply, to look after those packages, and stepped softly on the platform, disappearing through a door, over which was inscribed "First-class Refreshment Room." Bertha sat, meanwhile, uncomfortable and disconsolate, but not at his absence. She was cold, faint, and hungry, and felt nervous and depressed. Presently the bell rang, and Paul, putting a red nose in at the window to ascertain if the carriage was the right one, peeped into the next compartment, where a pretty girl sat; but the guard at that moment coming up, he was obliged to scramble to his seat, his eyes glistening as though from strong emotion, and his breath imparting to those of his fellow-passengers who might be ignorant of the cause a very curious example of the resemblance that the breath of a truly spiritual-minded person like Mr. Flook has at particular times to the smell of an empty rum puncheon, or even to a brandy bottle. Either the associations of Swindon, or the air, or rapid motion, had such an effect on the benevolent gentleman, that, having placed his hat on the lap, and under the protection of Miss Trot, and having next tied a certain red-and-white handkerchief, of a decided cottony appearance, over his poor dear head, he took advantage of a vacant seat opposite on which to rest his limbs, and once more closing his heavy eyelids, resigned himself to repose.

Just at Didcot, however, his slumber was disturbed by the untimely entrance of a couple of undergraduates from Oxford on their way to town, an occurrence which greatly perplexed and troubled good Mr. Flook, partly by the

pertinacity of one of these young gentlemen in choosing for a seat the very spot he wanted to rest his feet on, spreading thereon his railway rug, a wrapper of deep blue, with divers foxes' heads in red depicted on it, while his companion stood with his head and half of his body out of the carriage window, making playful remarks to his friends on the platform, Mr. Flook being all the while on a mental gridiron. At length they started, and the fun became "fast and furious." From this moment, as he afterwards expressed it, his eyes were robbed of their slumber, for the passenger with the cheerful rug kept up a most humorous conversation, supported by pantomimic gestures which added greatly to Paul's distress; nor was his anxiety wholly on his own account, for his charge showed symptoms of restlessness highly displeasing to him, and began to shiver, or pretended, as he thought, to do so; upon which the Oxford student insisted on covering her knees with a rug, much to her own comfort and Flook's indignation.

Determined to show fight at last under such a load of indignities, he drew from his pocket a tract headed "How now?" which he handed to one of the Oxonians, while to the other he gave a similar publication with the title "Where are you?" and to Bertha, for uniformity sake, he gave, with a greasy smile, "Are you Happy?" Lastly, he took to himself a stale copy of the "Hulla-bulloo."

Now, though he kept his ears open and every nerve stretched, yet for appearance sake he felt constrained to keep his eye on the page before him, so that he failed to notice the young gentleman opposite very busily engaged in drawing a kind of portrait known as caricature, to which, when completed, he appended the heading of Bertha's tract, and with some wafers fastened the sketch very cleverly on the panel just over Mr. Flook's head. So they rattled on their journey, till, in a state of martyrdom, Paul Flook and his charge found themselves at Paddington, and having endeavoured, more from habit than any other reason, to force a tract instead of his ticket on the collector, an obliging offer the benighted functionary declined, alighted in the metropolis.

Slapham, as all the world knows, is in one of the suburban districts; so, calling a cab, they enjoyed a long, if not pleasant drive. Unfortunately the route afforded Mr. Flook few opportunities for

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raising the mental and moral standard, according to his wont, of his little friend. Newgate was out of sight, but they passed many other public buildings, which he dragged, speaking metaphorically, into his discourse. Reformatories and such like institutions were suitable for his text, and so were the asylums for broken-down cabmen and decayed dogs'-meat men, as illustrating what people come to sometimes; and while little Bertha was timidly wondering to which of all these places she was going, Paul Flook was meditating as to the probability or otherwise of his being asked to stay to dinner, and whether he should only shake hands with his young friend, or bless her with his hand on her head, or kiss her—to which, after all, he was most inclined. After proceeding for some distance they suddenly stopped, and, it was at once evident, had reached their destination.

Slapham Hall was at that time a "semi-detached mansion," a white sepulchral-looking building, which seemed to have come out from the surrounding houses as being far too good to mix with them, and it stood alone, surrounded by a belt of shrubbery called "the grounds," while a straggling gravel path was designated, with a like courtesy, "the drive." The drive was protected by a strong iron gate, of sufficient complexity of pattern to deter adventurous young persons from essaying its devious device, while a formidable array of broken bottles along the crest of the wall effectually forbade any escalade in that direction: this peculiar arrangement cut both ways, so to speak, preventing some from coming and others from going.

Scarcely noticing these precautions, Bertha was handed out, and along with her benevolent companion, followed by the cabman, walked into the portico before the door. The door stood open, affording the spectacle of a phalanx of young girls passing at quick step across the hall; while the short word of command was occasionally heard, as it was their hour of drill. The cabman had deposited the luggage, and taken, not without a remonstrance, the silver coin Mr. Flook paid him; he had also taken himself off, when, in answer to a ponderous knocker and a feeble tinkling bell, a large-boned female came resolutely out upon them, and directly after another figure of a woman rushed abruptly from

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a dark passage, and, instinctively falling on Bertha as a lawful prize, dragged her in; then it turned round, and with an aspect of solemn, not to say awful surprise, confronted Mr. Flook.

Miss Snaill had never, even in her best days, been a very handsome woman, but as those were long past she was now strictly plain. Her face was pale and drawn to an angle at the chin, the forehead pinched and seamed, the hair thin, dry, and grey in streaks, elsewhere of a sandy hue. The eyes were grey and dull, hard and cold—one was turned obliquely to the nose. This most eloquent organ of expression seemed to repudiate its office by turning right up and pointing in the air; while the lips were so thin and pale as scarcely to be distinguished from the rest of the face. Such was a likeness of the individual who now accosted the benevolent gentleman.

"Excuse me, sir, but gentlemen cannot be admitted to this establishment—no, sir, not even to sit down and rest—for we must keep up the character of the house. So you will excuse me from asking you to walk in. The little girl may wish you good-bye."

"But, madam," urged Flook, "if I could just wash my hands, I am ready for dinner; and there's the cab gone too, and everything."

Miss Snaill, as a practical woman, only replied by dragging Bertha to the darkest end of the passage, while the bony servant took up a position at the door to keep out the benevolent-minded Paul, herself the unflinching supporter of her mistress's dignity, and a firm upholder of the Slapham Hall system; while Mr. Flook, finding for once that appearances were against him, shouldered his umbrella and trudged wearily back to town.

CHAPTER VII.

GARRET LODGERS.

IN the lowest part of the town, at a lodging-house frequented by hawkers and common strollers, lay a dying woman and her child. She had been found by a pedlar the evening before, stretched cold and speechless by the road-side, and he lifted her into his cart, and so brought her into Cropfield. Mrs. Bareface, the landlady, was indignant at the idea of sick people coming there to die and take away what

she called the character of her house; but on second thoughts she agreed to take her in, and promised to send for a doctor. Accordingly Dr. Mawplash was summoned; but he being snug in bed, his assistant Stumps went instead. There were three flights of stairs, narrow and steep, up which he had to travel, the reeking atmosphere growing more and more intolerable on each ascent. The steps were old and rotten, and he stumbled frequently, striking his head more than once against the low projecting beams, till he reached at length an open space where the staircase terminated close under the roof. A small window at one end, partly stuffed with old rags, let in through a single pane a solitary ray of light, the herald of approaching day, and by its aid he could just distinguish in a corner where the roof slanted to the floor, stretched on a litter of decayed and filthy straw, the emaciated figure of a woman. The miserable creature moaned feebly and shook her wasted limbs, while a puny infant at her breast moaned also, but in a still fainter tone. As he stood horror-struck at this sad spectacle, the light grew every moment stronger and brighter, till a glorious beam of sunlight burst full on the grimy casement, revealing more fully the dreadful reality before him. The thick massive timbers overhead were thickly festooned with black cobwebs almost as old as the house itself, while loathsome insects crawled everywhere on the discoloured walls. Stooping over her, though sickened by the offensive stench, he endeavoured to ascertain her condition; but to all his inquiries she could only groan in reply.

"Well, sir, and what do you think of her?" asked the landlady, as she heard his feet descending the creaking stairs. "It will not be long with her, I suppose?"

"Not unless she is supplied with proper food and medicine," he answered. "If you will see to the first, I will undertake the other—so good morning."

Mrs. Bareface was not a hard-hearted woman in an extreme sense of the word. She looked at the two shillings left with her by the pedlar for the garret lodger's breakfast and other comforts, and thought it would not go very far, when the rent "and all" was paid.

"But supposing, sir," she remarked, at Mr. Stump's next visit, "if anything should happen"—which seemed very

likely, and it was not very probable any more generous pedlars would be coming that way at present—"wouldn't it be best to remove the poor creature to the workus, afore it did 'appen?"

This was the gist of Mrs. B.'s communication.

Stumps promised he would call Mr. Grindem's attention to the case, in his capacity of relieving-officer; and being thus relieved from any urgent anxiety on this topic, she thought she would give her lodger another feed.

But, pending her removal to the workhouse, a stranger called at the door of Mrs. Bareface's establishment, and wanted to know if a woman and child were staying there; and though he did not look like a pedlar, she thought he might do as well.

Now, on leaving for Cropfield in the train of his illustrious master Mr. Trot, Wakeful Loodle had given parting instructions to his wife to follow the circus as early as her state allowed; but not having received any intelligence of either mother or child for several weeks, though he even borrowed an old copy of the *Times* and tried hard to spell down the first column, he had grown anxious for their welfare. "They must be there," he said, "by this time, and I will go back and find them."

But Trot had far too high an opinion of his clown's services to entertain such an idea, and of course refused permission with as many oaths as his command of language allowed. Therefore nothing remained for Loodle but to bid adieu to his service, and putting together his spangles and an acrobat's sword, he departed, resolved to make his way there.

By inquiry at the police office, a small room in the cottage of the policeman, and by further questioning a functionary in laced cocked-hat, who filled the responsible offices of beadle and town-crier, he learnt that no female and child had been seen begging in the streets or neighbourhood of the town for near as he, the beadle, could remember, over two years. Then a bright idea struck him. He would apply at the workhouse; but not a ray of hope could be gained in that quarter, and the porter slammed the door with a recommendation for him to go to the relieving-officer, or further still, in language unparliamentary.

Now Grindem was not at all the sort of person, to judge from his appearance alone, any one would care to appeal to in

distress. His face seemed worn sharp by much intercourse with these people, and his eye had acquired a strange, hard, diamond-point expression, capable of counting the very morsels of food in a pauper's stomach, supposing the creature could possess such a very superfluous organ, on which point he had an opinion of his own, and a pretty strong one too. His dress was an old pepper-and-salt suit, the well-worn but ill-made coat partly concealed by a rusty black cape picked up as a bargain at the undertaker's. An awful bad hat, pitched on the back of his head, completed his outward man. He had a habit when addressed of pushing the hat still further back, while shading his grizzly eyebrows with a long, bony hand. On such occasions his eyes seemed to acquire a supernatural appearance, like those of an angry cat glaring from a dark corner.

Such was the person whom Wakeful Loodle had now to encounter for the purpose of learning the whereabouts of his wife and child.

It unfortunately happened that only the day previous the overseers of Cropfield Union had been entertaining themselves at one of their board-room dinners, and Grindem had sat down with them. It was not every day by a good deal that he had such a chance, and he made the most of it. Short commons was the rule at his own table, and he was so lean and thin and hungry, that when he did eat, it took enough for six men to satisfy him. But Grindem was no exception to the ordinary run of mankind in respect at least to the anatomy and physiology of his gastric organs; and on the morning in question an ominous dash of yellow in what ought to have been the whites of his eyes gave portent of trouble to come.

This significant warning was thrown away on the anxious Loodle, whose ignorance on the subject may have been excused, so he repeated his inquiry.

"And what are you?" asked Grindem in reply, putting up his hand to his eyebrows, and jerking back his old hat on his head.

An awkward question for W. L.; for to say he was only a jester, or mountebank, or even Merry Andrew, however strictly true, would scarcely be the surest method of gaining the consideration of a relieving-officer.

"I, sir," he answered—"I—why, to say the truth, I—am at present out of employment."

"Ah, indeed, I thought as much; but you wont get relief out of me," said Grindem, with a ferocious grin—"no, not one farthing."

"I only wanted to know about my wife," expostulated Loodle, in a submissive tone.

"I know nothing of your wife, and don't believe you have one. You are a common tramp, that's what you are," exclaimed the public reliever of distress.

At this instant Mr. Stumps came up, and drawing Grindem aside—having first glanced at his eyes—in a kindly manner gave him the particulars of his night visit and Mrs. Bareface's fears of something awkward occurring.

Before he had finished speaking, the relieving-officer stepped up to where Loodle stood, and waving his bony hand as a sort of sign-post, cried—

"Here's your man, and now be off with you."

So it was from her medical attendant that Wakeful obtained the information of his wife's present abode, and upon which he speedily reached the house.

"And what be you?" asked Mrs. Bareface, as she turned over some pork chops on the fire. "What be you?" she repeated, as the stranger seemed disposed to walk in. "If a comfortable lodging is what you want, you are come to the right place for one. Oh, a woman and child! Well, now, they are jist a-going to the wurkus, but what's to do with them? You bean't of that sort, I s'pose, be you?" and as she asked, her eye watched Loodle with keen interest, for she had a reminiscence of a hungry person once coming to the door and walking off with a rump-steak just as she had done beating it with the rolling-pin, before cooking it for dinner; but not detecting any such dangerous propensity in the looks of her present visitor, though he did cast rather a sheep's eye on the chops, she bade him walk in and shut the door.

"No," said Mrs. Bareface to Mr. Stumps afterwards, "I would not have lost sich a sight, not for a n'arf crown; why, honions to smell were nothing to it; no, nor pepper in the nose, nor mustard neither for that matter." Such was that excellent landlady's graphic account of the meeting between Loodle and his Mary Jane.

It seems he had gone straight upstairs, never stopping but once, when he knocked his head against a beam, and the

object of his search was before him. In a few minutes he reappeared, coming fast downstairs, the infant in one hand and his wife on the other—a spectacle that had a very touching effect on a woman of the landlady's feelings, particularly as she feared they were about removing to another lodging.

Mrs. Bareface began, therefore, to weep, in the absence of words to express more faithfully her emotions. "Oh dear, oh dear, my poor dear child!" she could just ejaculate; "where are you going? what will you do? And here's the dinner a-being spiled, which I was a-doing for you with these very hands!" This last charge completely turned the enemy's flank, and stopped Loodle in a moment.

"What!" said he, "be them chops there for her? I thought you said 'twas your own dinner."

On being assured they were entirely at his wife's service and his own, if he liked to stay, Wakeful deposited his burden on a rickety old sofa, while she prepared to do justice to the meal; Mrs. B. becoming wonderfully cheerful and helping the viands, or "wittles," as she called them, with astonishing condescension.

"I thought she'd like 'em, poor thing, they be so werry suitable for a weak stomach; and now I think of it, a pint of mild table ale wouldn't do her any harm."

This thoughtfulness pleased Loodle, and after fumbling in all his pockets, he presently produced a sixpence, which he handed to the landlady with an order for the beer, and soon a quart of nut-brown ale was foaming on the table. It was arranged, therefore, after dinner, as the company regaled themselves on some gooseberries off a cabbage-leaf, that seemed in some way to enhance the flavour, that the sick woman and her husband and child should remain under Mrs. Bareface's roof, exchanging the garret for a better room, of which the landlady declared she had ever so many at their service; but it could not be quite like a private apartment, 'cause, she remarked, her house was so full and 'specially towards night; so she promised to allot them one where none but the most 'spectable parties were admitted. This room was in every way superior to the other, for the floor was quite sound, with the exception of two small holes near the door, "vich," as Mrs. Bareface philosophically observed, "you are not

bleeged to notice, so as you don't put your feet into 'em." The walls also were more decidedly white, and the bed, which was the third, going in on the right, had a curtain and a brown quilt, so that it was worth sleeping in, if not at any price, as she wished to persuade them, at least for a moderate consideration. The cob-webs, too, were only in the corners of the ceiling, not everywhere; and the window, though constructed on the admirable principle of not opening so as never to require shutting, was entire, except three top panes, which were carefully represented in brown paper.

To this snug apartment the little family accordingly repaired just as it became dusk, to save candle-light, and so they remained waiting the introduction of other inmates. After the dusk had deepened into dark, and lights from across the way began, after the manner of household will-o-the-wisps, playing across the ceiling and up and down the walls, the hum of conversation gradually arose in the sitting-room below, from being at first low and indistinct, as if the people there were too tired to talk, in the course of an hour or so, to an indescribable clatter of tongues, broken occasionally by a harsh discordant laugh, or the disjointed fragments of a song, while from the jingle of glass and clang of cups it was evident the imbibition of fluids was going on.

In the course of another hour or so, there were sounds of music, not unlike the tones of a violin undergoing torture to the squeaking of a fife and the thrumming of a mad tambourine. Then the glasses clashed and the voices grew loud and strong, and from the tumultuous thumping and rocking it was clear dancing had begun. From this stage of the proceedings the business briskly advanced, till the furniture followed and began to jig after a fashion of its own, and it seemed as though a chair had gone too fast and some one's head got broken in consequence. Then a poor little superannuated clock that nobody ever noticed, as if to spite them for their neglect, struck twelve, at which signal the uproar subsided; then heavy feet went slumberously upstairs, creaking on and on, up ever so many flights, and mostly followed by a heavy rolling on the floor, as though sleep had come and struck down their owners before they were aware. So night came on to the full. Then the door of Loodle's apart-

ment was softly opened, and a glimmer of light shone in. Mrs. B.'s crack lodgers were coming up to bed. "This is the room for your money, my man, and there's a nice, tidy couple there already, so you won't be lonesome." Thus speaking, she ushered in a tall, gaunt man, with a false leg and a green shade over his left eye, and behind him a short, fat man with a fiddle. "Your beds are just ready for you, gentlemen; now don't be long and I'll lend you a light." The fat gentleman, to judge from some expressions he let fall, could dispense with this liberal offer, but the tall one could not be satisfied with less than the whole candle, as he said his leg was uncommon stiff to come off, and he couldn't sleep with it on; the green shade and whatever was behind it seemed also to require attention, so the landlady put the light on the floor, in the absence of a table, and left them for a moment to themselves.

"I s'pose, Bill," said the proprietor of the fiddle, addressing him with the leg, "I s'pose these beds be clean; 'cos I'm very pertikler vere I sleeps, which is the reason I never takes off my clothes. Do you, Bill?"

"Well, Jem, I takes off my leg as a rule anyvhere; and as for the clothes, I thinks it safest generally to sleep in 'em, 'cos you sees damp sheets don't suit hevery constitution."

At this sally the fat man gave a chuckle, which was repeated about half-an-hour after, when the room was dark, and still and deep sleep had fallen on the wayworn woman and her child. Loodle, however, lay awake, revolving in his mind the events of the last two months—thinking of his late master and his daughter; of the mother and child beside him; of Mrs. Bareface; of the fat man with the mysterious laugh, and the tall man with the unaccommodating leg. Now he was speaking to Grindem, and he suddenly changed into Trot, and little Bertha laughed and galloped by in his wild dream. The other lodgers also slept, one snoring hard, the other every now and then awakening with a start and dropping off asleep again.

All this while the sun was rising on the horizon, up and up, higher and higher in the sky—day would soon begin; ah, too soon, and each in that old house would start up to life, and go forth again on their weary pilgrimage! Silent sleepers, slumber on; 'tis the happiest hour in your lives—the hour of uncon-

sciousness! Slumber on in sweet oblivion, as though neither care, nor sorrow, nor want, nor pain were gnawing, gnawing within. Slumber on; not far off may be the day when some of you will be at rest for ever!

Notwithstanding Mr. Stumps' skill and frequent visits, and in spite of Mrs. Bareface's assurances to the contrary, and in direct opposition to Loodle's wishes and prayers, his wife grew steadily worse from day to day. Occasionally there would be a very slight improvement, to be invariably attributed by Mrs. B. to her infallible mallow-broth or sage-tea, which she held in high repute for consumption. Stumps had only the very slightest hopes of a recovery, and these he never admitted except when hard pressed by the unhappy husband. It even affected the landlady, whose sensibility was not morbidly acute, to see him sitting by the dying woman, talking of his plans for their future support, and how confident he felt she would soon be strong and well. Then, while she slept, he would take the baby and carry it to the room below, where Mrs. Bareface mopped the floor and sang to it in a cracked, husky voice. Sometimes, when the mornings were bright and warm, he would wander into the green fields, bearing the little fellow with him, placing him by his side as he lay for hours in the waving, flowery grass, listening to the larks singing up in the clear blue heaven, and thinking of one who would never more be his companion in their rambles through bye-roads and green lanes from hamlet to town.

As he lay on such a time lamenting, while watching the setting of a glorious summer sun, and perhaps thinking of another orb, where "the wretched may have rest," a neatly dressed young woman, passing close by, gave a little start, and pressing the arm of her companion, cried out—

"Oh, look, Dick! a horrid tramp!"

Dick, making a pretence of admiring the landscape, did so, and squeezing her arm in reply, said—

"Why, my dear, 'tis that very man whose wife I am attending in consumption!"

"Dear me!" she exclaimed, "how very funny! Where does he live?"

It was accordingly told by Mr. Richard Stumps to Miss Clementina Chemisette, how, when, and where he had been called to visit the dying woman. And the sad

story, greatly assisted by the balmy air of evening and the dying tints of day, made such a strong impression on her susceptible mind, that she resolved to accompany her lover at his next professional visit, and gratify her womanly feelings by witnessing the interesting spectacle. It was altogether such an unusual event for a well-dressed woman to enter Mrs. Bareface's house, that the worthy landlady may be excused holding up both her hands as she opened the door, and repeating twice over—

"Well, I niver—niver did see sich!"

After which exhibition of natural surprise, she addressed to herself a private inquiry as to "what the world was a coming to!" and being satisfied on this point, she turned to the visitors, and with many notes of admiration, proceeded to show them upstairs.

"Here's a lady come with the doctor, Mrs. Loodle!" she said, standing at a discreet distance from the patient; for, like many other people, Mrs. Bareface was of opinion a decline was "catching."

Clementina took hold of the sick woman's wasted hand, and put several questions quickly one after the other, ending each interrogatory with a—"La!" "Just fancy!" "Dear me!" "Ah, indeed!" and similar expletives of interest or astonishment. Then Mr. Stumps took her place, and gave half-a-dozen taps on each side of his patient's chest, to show her, as he said, that the lungs were gone, then a couple or so more to satisfy his intended there was no deception, then another to satisfy himself.

Lastly, the young lady expressed her surprise with as much indignation as her sweet little mouth could utter, that the poor woman's husband did not stay constantly by her side; and Mrs. Bareface having offered an explanation of this circumstance, Miss Chemisette hoped he took pains to procure her plenty of good wine and nourishing soup. At which suggestion Mr. Stumps winked, nodded, and shook his head; by which mysterious signals he endeavoured to insinuate that the sick person had better not be questioned any further. And Clementina having exhausted her topics of conversation, prepared to leave, only adding, in a considerate tone of voice, her astonishment that any person really ill could think of staying in such a place—which remark was rather addressed to the bed-post—and then drawing up the brown quilt, so as to fold it gently

over the sick woman's face—thinking, no doubt, a little air, more or less, could not be of much consequence to any one who was really dying,—she tripped lightly downstairs in a delightful flutter of charitable excitement; Mrs. Bareface seeing her to the door with forbearance, not to say respect, in the fond though faint expectation of a halfcrown being somehow left for the benefit of the sick lodger, but no such donation being made, she registered a vow to do no more cooking for "them Loodles" till last week's rent was paid.

When Mary Jane told her husband all the young lady said, and how she showed her feelings, he was much affected, and actually managed to procure for her a medicine bottle full of a sour dark reddish fluid, that he had bought for port wine; and though it was an abominable deception, he considered it on the whole rather a bargain, especially as he had only to go without his dinner for that day and the next; while the very sight and smell of the bottle, to say nothing of the taste, filled the honest heart of Mrs. Bareface with virtuous indignation, as she tossed her head, and declared that "folks as can drink wine ought to pay their rent, and not keep honester folks a-waiting for their money." But it was all in vain, and even Stumps had to give in and suggest the clergyman. Mrs. B., whom Loodle consulted on the subject, confessed she took no interest in "the clargy;" "she had enough to do," she said, "with her lodgers, and to see they acted honourable and paid their rent." She did not know if the vicar or the curate visited sick people; she "never heerd. He was an old gentleman, was the vicar, and p'raps wouldn't like to come; and the curate was a young un, and mebbe he'd not do." But Stumps spoke to the curate, Mr. Newcome, who cheerfully undertook the charge, and at once entered on the work. The doctor's physic was now stopped, except an occasional sleeping-draught; but the curate's medicine seemed to answer its purpose, for the poor sufferer was calm and free from pain.

CHAPTER VIII.

MORS PULSAT.

A GREAT event was impending at Cropfield—nothing less than the biennial fair, when the little town gave itself up to

three days' reckless dissipation. There were even now signs of the approaching carnival, in the shape of half a dozen monstrous yellow vans, decorated with gigantic paintings three times the size of life and twice as natural, fitted also with a small funnel or stove-pipe in the roof of each, and a flight of steps—not such as angels tread—leading up to a mysterious glass door, through which occasionally vanished a dirty woman with a pot of beer, or a dirtier man with a pipe, while a cluster of the dirtiest children peered out on the assembled young rag-muffins below.

These huge boxes on wheels were drawn up on a vacant patch of ground in a corner of the town, and their arrival was followed in due course by a certain red and green tenement, also on wheels, dragged by the skeleton of a broken-down cart-horse, and recognised by the oldest inhabitant of Cropfield as the residence of that identical dwarf whose supernatural aspect had filled the mind of young Cropfield with speculation for the last forty years.

Those marvellous machines would steal in under cover of night, to appear in the morning built up on poles, gaily coloured, and quadrangular in form, with a car suspended at each corner, and a little scaffold and windlass in the centre, the whole construction only awaiting the enthusiasm of the right moment, and the small charge of one penny per seat, to be set in motion. There was likewise a theatre coming, to which the play-going members of the community looked forward with a fearful interest, and made their preparations accordingly.

It was a white day in the life of Mrs. Bareface, when a dirty-looking man, with a beard and organ, accompanied by a bear and a monkey on its back, took up his quarters beneath her hospitable roof. The stout man with the fiddle returned also to his old lodgings, as did likewise his one-legged friend; and among other arrivals of interest were two young ladies who mostly appeared in public on stilts, with which they disported themselves above the heads of the crowd. Lastly, the slumbers of Cropfield were distracted by the entrance of distinguished foreign musicians in green and braid, who were noted for the indomitable perseverance with which they played, or displayed, in the very streets where it was a moral impossibility they could gain any compensation for their noise.

It could not, of course, be supposed for a moment, that in the midst of this jubilee Mrs. Bareface could find time to think of the Loodle family, beyond the slight fact that, as the bed on which the wife was dying had shared in the general rise of property, and it was clearly to be foreseen that the rent was of an upward tendency, so the landlady, with admirable sagacity, at once resolved the woman should be promoted to the topmost room till the fair, at least, was over.

"And much better for her, poor thing!" she exclaimed, observing the husband was on the point of urging an appeal. "So carry her up at once, Mr. Loodle, if you please, where she will be out of the way of the noise."

This last argument completely settled poor Loodle, who being tolerably broken down under his troubles, never thought of making any remonstrance, but gathering together his few traps, and taking the dying body of his poor Mary Jane, carried her as he best could up the steep, dirty, ill-smelling stairs, and laid her down in the old corner, on the mouldy fragments of a straw bed under the cobwebbed beams.

"It's the last stage but one," he murmured, kissing her forehead. "The next removal will be—"

"Hoightly, toightly!" cried Mrs. Bareface from the stair-head, whence, with no slight satisfaction, she had watched the execution of her plans. "Tut, tut! ye'll be cheerful and snug up here, and I'll only charge yer the rint ye should have paid for t'other room. We'll be having some company to-night down below, if ye like to join us, Mr. Loodle; there'll be rare fun, I promise ye."

That evening the sun set in a lurid sky, a hollow wind had arisen and blew in angry gusts: it was going to be a rough night. As evening closed, the sounds of merriment and festive uproar came up in a fainter cadence from the distant fair-field; the loud hoarse cries of the showmen, the blare of trumpets, and the ceaseless rub-tub-tub of the drum died gradually away; then clamorous voices filled the brightly lighted taverns, and as doors opened and slammed, wild snatches of song and peals of coarse savage laughter broke on the ear; then the clocks tolled with a deep sepulchral tone, as though to warn the idle revellers that time was fleeting by, never more to be theirs. A loud call, a half-drunken voice floated on the night air; the wind

blew louder; the clouds spread out like a net of misty spray over the darkened heavens; here and there a star peeped timidly through the scud, to be blotted out again by the rolling mist; still the wind blew louder, filling the chimneys with its mournful, sad, moaning voice, sighing under the eaves, raising a wild lament at the windows. The fair-field and all the busy town was quiet now, and the old church tower held up its grey head, but dimly seen, as though protesting against the gewgaws and vanities below.

"Ho, ho, ho! where's the ape?" "Why, he's drunk! ha, ha, ha!" Then the lugubrious tones of a barrel-organ were heard, accompanied by a hoarse roar of laughter.

Mrs. Bareface had her evening "at home." In the common room she sat amidst her guests, a motley crowd of people—the most prominent figure that of a lusty beggar whose wounds and infirmities were now miraculously healed, and the hideous features he assumed when calling for charity on solitary unprotected women were now relaxed into a still more hideous leer of convivial sport. A low-browed, dark-featured man dressed in a suit of flashy but very dirty apparel, sat somewhat apart from the rest, examining with close attention a well-stuffed pocket-book he had picked up somewhere during the day. Two young girls were imbibing hot gin-and-water after their exertions on stilts for the benefit of a greasy rogue who considered himself their protector. Another blear-eyed ruffian smoked his pipe beside them; while a little mangy ape, also blear eyed, crouched under the table, gnawing bits of crust with evident enjoyment, while its master occupied a corner by the fire with his organ on his knees, grinding away with drunken gravity and indifference. Now the wind howled and moaned more piteously than before, as the casements rattled and shook and doors and timbers groaned. Then it lulled and sighed itself to rest, as if bemoaning its lot, doomed to wander on the darkest nights over the rugged mountain, over the pathless sea. Oh, unhappy element, restless and shivering, storming with fury, or muttering in despair! Now it has returned from its retreat, bellowing over the high house tops, shrieking from the lonely tower, shaking in its wild wrath at the ill-latched window, tugging and struggling to enter, falling off again in sheer despair, and sweeping away as if to hide its baffled

strength. Anon with renewed might it comes on, again roaring with displeasure, swelling with fury, urging its fierce vehemence on roof and turret, snatching in a giddy whirl the dead and dying leaves, victims to its wrath. Cruel, pitiless blast, why wreak thine anger on the helpless and fallen? spend thy fierce strength on the stubborn forest king, wrestle with his sturdy limbs and shiver in thy madness the emblem of his power, but spare the dead and dying. Hark, the bell tolls one! and between the howling of the storm rings the wild shout of revelry below, mingling with desperate oaths, and the laughter of vexed friends, the madness of drunken men; then again the sounds are lost in the discordant voices of the elements as they rage in wild confusion—wind and rain and storm! It was on such a night the garret lodger died, clasping her pale thin hands and moving only her thin pale lips as Death held her in his grip, and the spirit soared away above the storm and din, above the uproar from within—to perfect rest and peace. When day again broke and the morning light came flashing up across the eastern sky and through the shattered pane, her body lay calm and still, unconscious of the loving heart and heedless of the whimpering cry of the babe beside: the grim majesty of death mocking the meanness of material form in the simple grandeur of repose.

The fair was over, and the town had regained its accustomed air of sobriety, when a lowly funeral train passed up the narrow street to the old churchyard, where, in the words of the solemn burial service, "ashes" were committed "to ashes, and dust to dust;" after which impressive ceremony, the officiating clergyman, who was the young curate, returned to his lodgings, where, not having been long in the profession, he remained very sadly, in spite of a glass or two of sherry, till the end of the day; while Mr. Stumps, having no rooms to retire to—for he also had attended the funeral—nor even sherry to consume, repaired to the abode of Miss Chemisette, where he drank tea in the back parlour, and spent a very stupid evening.

It only remained for Loodle, widower, to settle with honest Mrs. Bareface, after which operation he found himself sensibly lighter in pocket, if not in heart, and quitted her hospitable roof at early dawn, carrying his baby, wrapped in an old pocket-handkerchief, with a bundle of

spangles and other properties, with which he left the town, just turning his head at the bottom of the street to notice for a moment a boy taking down the shutters of a new corner shop, over which a bright blue board, duly emblazoned with the name of "Stumps," occupied a prominent position, while a window-blind in the room above, ascending at that moment by successive jerks, showed Stumps was wide awake and up to the time of day.

CHAPTER IX.

BEGINNING AND END OF THREE YEARS AT SLAPHAM HALL.

LITTLE Bertha—her stiff travelling dress having been taken off and submitted to private criticism, in anticipation of what its wearer would go through, and her small valise and large black trunk having been unpacked—herself, after two or three hours passed on a kind of neutral ground between Miss Snaill and her pupils, was duly packed off to bed, where, after sobbing out many tearful resolutions never, never to pray for any good to the kind old lady or the benevolent gentleman, her eyes gradually ceased distilling these dews of night, and her mind and body sank to rest.

Day after day she had to learn by sad experience her actual position, which was rather the reverse of a "parlour boarder," and also what was expected of her by those for whose edification, improvement, and, it seemed, amusement, she had been admitted to the inestimable blessings of Slapham Hall. Gifted with naturally shrewd parts, she was not long in discovering the lights and shades of her new life, while she acquired a childlike affection for those who exhibited any kindly feeling towards the solitary little creature—a regard for such as offered her no absolute injury, and a fierce hate towards those tender-hearted young ladies who made her the special object of their jokes. The petty trials incidental to school life, whether in academies and public schools for boys, or seminaries and "colleges" for girls, she encountered and passed through with tolerable success: her ready flow of animal spirits in time recovered the shock of transplanting, and the foundation of a "polite education," with as many accomplishments as the "extra-masters" chose to throw away

upon her, were in course of time severally acquired.

Thus Miss Trot was, as it were, insensibly metamorphosed from the child of nature to the child of art, and at this period of her career it was no wonder if she learnt to become very artful indeed. The absence of any knowledge on those subjects which young ladies are accustomed to consider indispensable was, it may be understood, very speedily remedied, and in the numerous nondescript elegances of polite life, with which Bertha was as familiar as a little savage, she became before long remarkably proficient. Only at times her high spirits interfered grievously with the correct deportment so essential in a member of Slapham Hall, to counteract which she was often brought to book, or the book brought to her, and the calm influence of a long French verb, in a hot, stifling atmosphere, had a remarkable effect in subduing the latent propensity to leap wildly over sheets stretched from bed to bed in the sleeping-rooms, or the supernatural accomplishment of standing in impossible attitudes, with similar displays of the talent which had originally budded in Trot's Circus. In the matter of "calisthenics," so much vaunted in the Slapham Hall programme, it was impossible to deny that Bertha carried off the palm, and even Sergeant Swearem was bound to acknowledge she was an "out-and-outer," whatever that might be.

If the narrative can be made more interesting without detracting from its truthfulness, which we are bound to consider of most consequence, it may suffice to skip over the next two or three years in the life of Miss Trot, and at or about the expiration of that period to endeavour if possible to recognise that modish young lady occupying a prominent position in a little galaxy of female faces in the north gallery of the parish church of Slapham. There they shine Sunday after Sunday, looking graciously down from the height of propriety on the rest of the congregation; nor even do the sacred vestments of the curate, Mr. Winkey, shield him from their penetrating glances.

Winkey is not a bad-looking fellow, and he is generally liked and respected in the parish, and looked up to, especially when in the pulpit, by his congregation, with many of whom he is on intimate terms. For instance, there is Mrs. Tidpot, at whose tea-table he may frequently be seen; but then Miss T. is very pretty,

and is thought to give him encouragement. And there is old Juggles, the retired merchant, who attends the morning and afternoon service regularly, carrying a neat silk umbrella summer and winter. He also keeps an excellent cellar, and Mr. Winkey dines with him every Sunday. Of course the curate is a bachelor and lives in lodgings, the rent of which is paid by the vicar, old Plummey, and Winkey says it would be more convenient if all his bills were paid in the same way. Not that he is extravagant, but he will state in confidence that it is not his own fault if the income or stipend is too small for his purposes, and since his tradespeople wait his convenience, he repays them with the benefit of his custom; the butcher, baker, and so forth being accounted less worthy of his confidence, and, indeed, being less anxious for it, are summarily paid in vulgar coin, but the tailor, bookseller, wine merchant, and even the cigar dealer, thrive, or are supposed to, on the application of the opposite principle.

The rent is paid by the vicar in consequence of a former curate having had a weakness of memory in respect to the settling day—an inconvenience which naturally resulted in his disappearance one fine morning, leaving only behind a considerable deficiency for unpaid lodgings. It is strange it should generally be a "fine morning" on which such events are wont to happen, but such is life.

In consequence of this arrangement a vast amount of anxiety is removed from Winkey's breast, to say nothing of the landlady's, who is not of course to be considered. In his appearance the curate is rather prepossessing than otherwise, having tolerably regular features, a healthy complexion, brown hair, blue eyes, dazzling white teeth, and a good voice. His manners are crisp but cheerful, especially when in lady's society, so the sex voted him a loveable man, and made a good deal of him. His pulpit oratory is neither imprecatory nor declamatory, nor at all heating, but mild and suitable for weak digestions; as for his views, they are moderate, extremes being his chief aversion. As a Bachelor of Trinity, Dublin, he is to be drawn with his blue hood, which the ladies much admire, as it contrasts so nicely, they think, with the scarlet hood and scarf of Dr. Plummey, who is a full-blown dignitary, canon of St. Peter's, and incumbent of two snug benefices in Nor-

folk, besides that at Slapham, where he usually resides.

Every Christmas the curate receives ten pair of worsted slippers, and all the year round a regular chain of embroidered braces, kettle-holders, watch-pockets, and book-markers, most of which come from the young ladies of Slapham Hall. But of all who pay this secret tribute, none have been more constant than Miss Trot, who for prudent reasons had a particular desire to change her name. It was, then, Bertha's hand that painted those remarkably useless hand-screens; it was, of course, her hands that embroidered that elegant tobacco-pouch. Her thoughts by day were the invisible gossamers floating around Mr. Winkey's head; her dreams by night of golden rings and honeymoons, wherein he and herself were the principal performers. Alas for fond expectations! alas for a girl's love!

It happened in one of their morning walks—for the pupils at Slapham Hall were thoroughly ventilated once a day—on crossing the street they came suddenly on a crowd gathered round an acrobat, who was pursuing the business of balancing a pole on his chin, with a small boy, looking like a withered anatomy of himself, perched at the upper end. The poor man had a sad, careworn look in spite of his harlequin costume, and the grave, solemn aspect of the child seemed a quaint reflection of his own. It was well nigh impossible to watch them without feeling an interest evoked quite apart from the common jugglery of their trade; here was evidently a hard-worked, much-enduring man, perhaps a father; and at the other end of the pole an equally hard-worked and perhaps still more enduring child.

"Oh, gracious!" exclaimed one young lady to another, "what a horrid sight! Do look there!"

Miss Trot glanced in the direction, and at once recognised, though obscured by dirt and want, the features of her old friend Wakeful Loodle, the clown. Her first impulse was to rush up and make the recognition mutual, but second thoughts made such an act appear ridiculous; so contenting herself with a suppressed sigh, she flung some pence into the road beside him and walked on.

Somehow this spectacle completely damped her spirits for the rest of the walk, and even the accidental appearance of Mr. Winkey on the opposite side of

the street failed to excite more than a slight flush as he made a killing bow.

Her companions noticed her low spirits, and she sat alone, often sighing, through the rest of the day.

"Heigho!" said Bertha, wearily, "I shall be glad when it is bed-time." But it was not from mere weariness of body so much as weariness of mind that she wished for the silence and darkness of night; nor was it to forget in sleep the thoughts which haunted her brain, but rather to combat those painful shadows of the distant and unseen—to stifle, if she could not crush, the gloomy misgivings, the rising apprehensions of an approaching change, a speedy separation and departure—an unwelcome exchange of her present mode of life for one so odious and distasteful that the refined and polished maiden involuntarily shrank from its mere recollection. To this had three years of an artificial life in a fashionable seminary brought the young half-civilized being of yesterday, now no less graceful because more civilized, and infinitely better for the change. But, alas! to what would this lead? She now remembered how her preceptress had distinctly told her that three years was to be the period during which she would remain under her charge. Three years! What an immense time it then appeared, and now, alas, looking back on those three years, the latter part of which had been the happiest in her life, it seemed all so short—ah! so very short! Yes, she had been happy at Slapham Hall, indulged by her teachers, beloved by her companions, the life and centre of many a little circle, the idol of those tender hearts that had not yet learnt to bestow their overflowing love on the more orthodox objects of affection. She thought sadly of these things. And all this wretchedness and anxiety from the merely accidental spectacle of poor old Loodle harmlessly pursuing his avocation, with slight thoughts of whose eyes were watching his contortions, or whose hand had cast the coppers on the road, or would he have spent them on his supper?—we should say not.

As for the idea of ever rejoining her parents in their miserable career, it was not to be endured; it was one consolation under these circumstances, their whereabouts and very existence were unknown, as no kind of correspondence had been attempted between them and herself for the past three years.

No wonder she slept but little, tossing to and fro, or if slumbering for a few minutes, awakening still more depressed. At length the day broke. Another day! Who should declare what it might bring forth? Thus she thought while dressing, and again when she saw Miss Snaill select one out of a batch of letters just arrived by post and place it in her pocket-book, and sent Bertha word to follow her after breakfast into her private room.

"Do you know that handwriting, Miss Trot?" she asked, as Bertha approached.

"No," replied the young girl, trembling with emotion. "I do not think so," as she glanced at an envelope on which the address was written in a clumsy, sprawling hand.

"Think again, miss, if you please," said the principal, in a sharp, precise voice. "Don't you know that *s* and the turn of that *l*? come now."

"No," replied Bertha, shaking her head.

"Ahem!" answered the mistress, adjusting a pair of silver-mounted spectacles, and then opening the letter. "Just listen, then, if you please.—'Dear Madam, I purpose in the course of to-morrow calling at your excellent establishment to remove the young lady whom I left under your care about three years ago. Her kind friend, with whom you are well acquainted, has desired me to arrange for her departure by to-morrow, or next day at latest. I am, dear Madam, yours most obediently, Paul Flook.' There, what do you think of that?" cried Miss Snaill.

Bertha seemed to think anything or nothing, but it was plain she could not speak; though she stood just as before, yet a close observer might have seen the little heart beating, beating under the thin summer dress as though it would force its way through, while her long, slender fingers seemed to clutch convulsively the delicate white handkerchief as they rolled it round and round.

"Ahem! come!" said Miss Snaill—and then raising her eyes, and seeing the pale, bloodless face bending over her in speechless agony—"Oh, you foolish child!" she exclaimed; "go, drink a glass of water, and come back immediately."

Bertha drank the cold water to the last drop, and the ball which seemed to be rising, rising in her throat, went back

again of its own accord. She took one deep sigh and felt relieved.

"I have another letter here," Miss Snaill went on to say; "another letter for yourself—there."

It was in the same sprawling hand, and addressed to Miss Trot.

"Dear Miss: We shall have the pleasure of meeting again to-morrow under Miss Snaill's kind roof, from which you will accompany me to the house of another friend, where for the present you must remain. No more till I see you face to face, which will be very soon. Yours truly, and with much love, Paul Flook."

Miss Snaill was busily engaged in reading the other letters, but she was aroused on hearing a faint scream more like a sigh, and turning sharply, saw Bertha lying insensible on the floor.

Her first impulse was, naturally enough, to slap her hands and face, but on reflection it seemed better to ring for the servant, who could do it just as well. While this thought passed through her mind the door suddenly opened, and another girl of Bertha's age, or rather older, glided in; she did not speak, though her eyes flashed and her lips quivered, but throwing a furious glance at the school-mistress, bounded forward, and cast herself down on the prostrate, unconscious form of her friend. Then she burst into tears and loud cries of—

"Bertha! Bertha! speak, it is your Adelaide! Oh dear, oh dear!"

The domestic returned with cold water, some of which was at once thrown over the face and bosom of the unfortunate girl; then Miss Snaill, seeing matters going badly, knelt down and nipped her fingers, pressing back the nails, and putting into practice such other little domestic formulæ as the experience of Slapham Hall suggested.

Adelaide Fortescue pursued her plan of treatment also, pillowing poor Bertha's head on her knees, kissing the cold, wet temples, and laying her own flushed, burning cheek on the pale face, till at length she slowly returned to consciousness, and faintly asked to be allowed to go to bed; she could not bear the light, and pressing her hands against her throbbing eyeballs, fell back exhausted.

After she had been placed in bed, and the room comfortably darkened, with Adelaide sitting by her side, she more fully awakened to her condition, and her

first question was, if any one had yet come for her?

"No one as yet."

"Yet! oh yet! Do you know, Ada, what the time is?"

Ada Fortescue bent over and kissed her; then looking at a small gold watch, said—

"Just twelve, love."

"Oh, Adelaide! that man I used to tell you of, he is going to——"

And then she turned deadly pale, and could say no more.

An hour or two afterwards a fly drove away from Slapham Hall Seminary—a dark green fly, hardly to be mistaken. The name of John Marks, owner, was painted in narrow white letters low down on the panel, and the driver occupied a very high box; he, too, could not be mistaken. It is no matter whether his name was John Marks, or only "Bill," Mr. Marks' man. The horse, too, could be sworn to; it was a grey, with switch tail and marks of firing on the forelegs: the harness was rusty, and with brass mountings. After proceeding about a mile, a fat, pudding-faced man thrust his head out of the window and said something to the driver, who, without making any answer, turned off the main road, flogging the horse more than he had already, though it had not been spared; and thus the green fly and grey horse, with shabby harness and brass mountings, and the sullen driver and pudding-faced man, passed out of sight.

Two or three or more miles from Slap-ham Hall dwelt a former dependent of Mrs. Pegfoot's, by name Tobin, and she kept a small house for the sake of supplying the public with "Stiggins and Co.'s fine sparkling ales," and neat wines and spirits—of the latter more especially "Old Tom," and other "rich compounds." This small commercial establishment flourished under the sign of the Busy Bee—a name smelling strongly of Peg-footean inspiration, and for the matter of that, Mrs. Tobin knew she was indebted to something more than Pegfootean inspiration for the business she so successfully managed.

Upon this eventful day the Busy Bee was engaged as usual, not, indeed, in the words of the poet, "sucking honey out of every opening flower," but pouring nectar, or what went by that name, into the craving lips of as many flowers in human form as chose to pay for the same.

It was a hot day and a thirsty day, and the "Bee" had a busy time of it; the drones had to be supplied with their accustomed dram, and the workers required their mugs replenished, and amidst the clinking of pewter measures and the jingling of halfpence, disorder reigned supreme.

At this part of the daily life of the "Busy Bee" a green fly drove hurriedly to the door of its hive, while, as though from the belly of the vehicle, came dismal sounds of wailing and distress. After some delay the carriage door was opened, and the steps let down by the surly driver—who said afterwards, "He'd never ha' done it if he had knowed it." A heavy, bloated-looking man, dressed in black, slowly and cautiously alighted, and after him descended a young girl of seventeen or thereabouts, her eyes red and swollen with weeping, her hair dishevelled, her cheeks flushed, and a countenance of terror and painful distress.

"Tobin," cried the stout man, with an air of some authority, "take this young lady upstairs, and see she is attended to. Now, dear," he added, addressing the terrified girl, "come along; this is the friend's house where you will have to stay for the present."

So saying, not without a repulsive leer, he seized her in his arms, and half-carried, half-dragged her weak, resisting body across the pavement, through the crowded bar, up a narrow flight of stairs, and into a small dingy room, where he placed her on a sofa.

Now, though it may appear strange, it was nevertheless true, that Paul Flook was not so impatient on Miss Trot's account as on his own. So having safely deposited his helpless burden on the sofa in Mrs. Tobin's parlour, he immediately descended again to the private bar to provide for his inner man. When nearly an hour had elapsed, and Bertha had in some degree recovered herself, his heavy feet were heard ascending the stairs, and he appeared, having in one hand a small plate of cold meat, and in the other a glass of very small beer.

"Never mind, miss, you will get used to this by and by. I thought you would like a little something, perhaps."

"Having abruptly ended this introductory spark, he looked hard at nothing the ~~the~~ ^{the} dirtiest pane in the window, and turned his back on that part of the room where Bertha sat, as if not to watch her movements, but really only to

do so by aid of a mirror more effectually. But the poor girl sat still, silent and motionless, indifferent to outward things, like an alabaster statue of grief; only at intervals a deep sigh, so deep that it seemed to burst from her very heart, swelled her bosom: all but for that she might have been a statue—might have been even dead.

The thought seemed even to strike Paul Flook, for he grew more and more uneasy as hour after hour passed. He had amused himself at first by tracing marks and initials with his finger on the begrimed and dusty window; but he gradually gave up this pastime when he noticed the effect on his hands, and became more and more conscious of a worse stain on his soul. Then as daylight declined, and the street lamps were lit one by one, and the opposite windows began to twinkle with lights, he struck his hand on his low, hot, beetling brow, and paced hastily up and down the room. After a while he paused, and slowly, stealthily took a seat on the sofa, looking furtively at poor Bertha under a heavy scowl, leaning his elbows on the table, and slowly passing his hand across his mouth, gnawing each nail in succession.

Bertha looked up from her trance, surprised at first to find the room so dark and still—more alarmed to see the detested form of Flook sitting so near and almost touching her arm. She threw a glance at the window, and immediately stood by it, looking out on the street, but trembling all the while lest Paul's heavy hand should be laid on her shoulder; but he sat wrapped in dark meditation, and she remained eagerly watching the shadows of persons coming and going at liberty. Ah! what would she give to be one of them? Her thoughts running back to Slapham Hall, wondering if they knew what had happened to her—if any one would remember her there. Oh, if Adelaide could only be with her now!

All this time the room grew darker and darker as the street lights shone brighter, and an indescribable horror, a vivid sense of her helpless state passed over her soul.

Just then her arm was suddenly gripped hard, and a voice, terrible and ^{hallow}, rung like a knell in her ear—“Bertha!”

Oh, such a scream! ringing from ^{up} of to basement. People ran out into the street; windows flew up; Mrs. Tobin and two female servants rushed up to the room. Bertha had fainted.

“Oh, for shame!” cried the two servants, in a breath. “Was there ever such a thing? All alone with a young lady; 'tis quite scandalous, and the room as dark as pitch.”

Mrs. Tobin, not stopping to express her indignation, if she felt any, left to bring a candle; but before it was brought the maids had raised the young girl's body and laid it on the sofa, nudging and pushing the reluctant Paul to the door.

“It's not my fault,” he muttered; “I did not do anything;” but this seemed only to confirm them in their belief that he was a “mean wretch and a cantankerous scoundrel,” which epithets they hurled after him as he groped, stumbling and fumbling, down the stairs.

The landlady having by this time procured a light and made some tea, Bertha slowly rallied, and while Mrs. Tobin declared that she should on no account be left alone, the servants came to report that the fat gentleman had left the house, while Miss Trot was unanimously voted “a poor dear thing,” and a comfortable bed having been made ready, she was glad to retire, and thus close one of the weariest days of her life.

CHAPTER X.

A CERTAIN OLD LADY DRAWS TO HER END.

MISS CLARA PEGFOOT sat in her drawing-room: though the day was fine and the weather warm, a fire was kindled in the grate, and she wore on her shoulders a heavy, costly shawl; the air of the apartment was oppressive, the light partially excluded, and ventilation wholly so. By her side, as she thus sat coddled up in a spacious easy chair, stood on a small work-table an ominous-looking bottle containing a dark fluid, with an appropriate label appended, standing off at a right angle and pointing like a finger-post in the direction of a neighbouring churchyard. The handsome ormolu clock chimed with vexatious regularity its tribute to the passing hour quite unnecessarily, for the great church bell, close at hand, sufficiently indicated the lapse of time, apart from her own inward unutterable admonitions. With the peevish fretfulness of an invalid, she continually summoned a careworn-looking woman from an adjoining room, whom at each call she desired to ascertain the exact time; then the

shawl required to be readjusted, and the bottle of hot water to be refilled, and the window-blind to be dropped another inch or raised an inch and a half, the fire to be gently stirred ; and these several requirements being fulfilled, it seemed to occur to her to ask after her three favourite cats, and having heard they were well, she desired the servant to bring them in, while the dog must on no account be permitted to leave the room—a sentence poor “Jup” bore as well as could be expected ; perhaps he had a faint idea of being somehow kindly remembered in the old lady’s will ; at any rate he lay perfectly still, with his little black muzzle resting on his paws, and one eye open, like a prudent dog. Meanwhile, another day was stealing silently away, each hour of which comprised its tale of cares and pleasures, numbered and registered against the closing scene of all.

Despite the lassitude of sickness and physical exhaustion of natural decay, Miss Pegfoot’s mind retained its activity unabated and its powers undestroyed. It was now engaged in a troublous retrospect, not of some remote period, but of one comparatively recent, being no longer than three or four years, and yet it cost her more than all the rest, for her life had passed so smoothly in the main that there were few subjects on which her memory could rest during the preceding half century ; but the last three years seemed to contain in their narrow limit the anxiety of fifty. It was not so much whether she had acted rightly as for the best. It was true her charities had extended—every one knew that—but was she to allow the work undertaken, perhaps less on principle than for a selfish gratification, to drop and here end ? or should she make the necessary provision for enabling this particular object to continue the advantages she had already supplied, and which she had reason to believe had been most successfully employed.

While this subject was passing in slow and painful stages through her mind, the portly form of Paul Flook might have been seen pacing with portentous strides towards the house. He knew pretty well how matters were going on within, and if he did not, there were signs which, to his mind, brought back many similar experiences, and he looked at his fat bunchy fingers, on which the mourning-rings were clustered by twos and threes, and smiled. Yes, Paul was right ; there could be no mistake in the tan strewed

before the house, the muffled knocker, the doctor’s boy coming and going with the medicine ; but above all these commonplace indications, were the unfailing proofs such as he could read well, and had many a time good cause to mark them—signs of still greater value and importance, which declared beyond all doubt that the time had come.

To the eye of Paul Flook, Death, not as most men see or fancy him, but like a friendly form, wearing a friendly smile, and almost winking, stood just ready to knock at the door. Flook knew him well, for they had met before and stood between the curtains and beside the beds of some of those on whose account he wore those mourning-rings ; this time he thought it would be a better thing for him, and he looked impatiently at the house as if wondering why Death should stand so long outside. As he drew nearer, his mind’s eye espied the black flag waving solemnly overhead, and in anticipation the windows grew suddenly white : could it be reality ? He shuddered slightly as he knocked, and Death and he winked horribly as the door opened and they both slid softly in and upstairs, quietly and with consideration stepping lightly and on tip-toe over the thick piled carpet, and asking, with bated breath, to know the worst.

The servant showed them up, and they entered the room, Paul a little, only a little in advance—an advantage he was not sorry for when he learnt that Mr. Docket had not yet come, though everything had been got ready. Paul dropped into the chair that had been set for him, and Death, old familiar form, took up his position behind the sick woman, so that he and Paul could exchange knowing looks as the business went on.

“ Dear Mr. Flook,” said the old lady, in a feeble voice, “ you have come to see me for the last time.”

Paul bent deferentially forwards, as though her slightest wish should be law to him for the rest of his days.

“ Tell me,” she presently continued, “ how that dear child is going on, whom—”

Here she paused, and seemed to listen, as though expecting another arrival.

“ Mr. Docket, marm !” said the servant, with an air of piteous resignation.

“ Really, Jane,” replied the invalid, brightening up for the moment and speaking with all her ancient authority, “ I think he is very independent to keep

me waiting so long; why, I might have been dead and buried, and now he's to plague me about the will! I'll not make one, there—tell him so!" and she sunk back exhausted.

The woman caught a warning glance from Mr. Flook that deterred her from giving her mistress's message, or even from leaving the room.

Miss Pegfoot had closed her eyes, and seemed scarcely to breathe; Paul, with a most serious, perturbed countenance, watched her face, and, as he did so, he could see Death shaking an hour-glass behind the chair.

"I think you had better ask Mr. Docket to walk in," he said to the domestic in attendance.

"Oh, you think so, Mr. Flook, do you?" cried the old lady, in accents that almost pierced the wall; "I thank you kindly, I am sure!"

"Dear madam," exclaimed the benevolent gentleman, in his most honied voice, "consider, I beseech you, for one moment, the uncertainty of life, how short and precarious at the best is our existence, how sure our end!—take a little of this wine; there. Now let me answer that question you were about putting to me when we were disturbed—that sweet child whose welfare has so much concerned you, and for whom you feel, I am sure, more than a mother's affection. She is well, and a living testimony to your pious and generous consideration. My dear madam, I have only lately left that dear child; she bade me hasten to you to give you the assurance that she reciprocated from her heart the affection you have so graciously shown her. Ah, what said she? Let me see, it was something like this: 'Fly, Paul, fly, and tell our noble, generous-hearted friend, that to my last moment the recollection of her devoted kindness will fill my heart.' Oh yes; and she added this, 'Through poverty, or whatever trials I may naturally expect to pass, I shall be a living witness to her worth and excellence'—(ahem! aside—I think I said that before.)

"Paul," murmured the dying woman, in a voice though faint, yet intensely earnest and solemn, "Paul, I have ceased to care for the world; you have attended my steps through the latter part of my earthly pilgrimage; you have known my weaknesses and infirmities."

"No, no," sobbed Paul from the folds of a large white pocket-handkerchief.

"You have been much in my thoughts

of late, and with you have I associated the remembrance of this young person, whom, at your suggestion, I took upon myself to educate. I now feel the responsibility," she added with sad emphasis, casting a look at Paul Flook, whose features seemed now to dilate beyond all expression, "and it will entail on my soul I know not what, should this undertaking, to which I have put my hand, miscarry. Yet what can be done is now the momentous question. To whose care can I best entrust the sacred duty of forwarding this work, and under whose protection can I place her whom I have almost adopted as my own child?"

Paul seemed to indicate himself as far as he could by looking down at his slovenly boots.

"Yes," she continued, after another pause, "I have come to the conclusion that you are the fittest person, and you must therefore consent to act as her guardian and friend in my name, and for my sake. Now send in Mr. Docket."

An hour later Paul Flook returned to the room, but in this brief time a change for the worse had come over Miss Pegfoot's mortal frame. The ashy tint upon the face, the increasing livor of the lips, the fast failing sight and consciousness showed the end was at hand, as far as this world was concerned; already Death clutched his prey and almost shouted for victory. Still life ebbed slowly, in Flook's opinion, and she seemed to die hard. Oh no, fast, too fast the sand was running out, and softly and quickly the sleep coming on; even now the body was growing cold, each fibre of flesh was turning to clay, nature was dying out at every pore.

Her lips only moved; in a choking whisper she said, "Paul—my blessing—remember!" then the dull glazing eyes closed, the jaw dropped, a deathly pallor covered the face,—the old lady was dead!

Mr. Flook strolled out for a little air as soon after as he conveniently could, his mind, such as it was, having been so agitated during the last forty-eight hours, he could scarcely believe his senses; in fact he was too successful to be happy. When it was dark he returned, this time alone; the fresh air had calmed his agitated brain and cooled his flushed face. He spoke softly to the maid servant, and, with a sigh, inquired if his supper was ready; "for you know," he added, "I must sleep here to-night," the necessity for which arrangement the woman seemed scarcely

to perceive, and sullenly acquiescing went to prepare the evening meal.

To bed, but not to sleep! To lie tortured by a thousand apprehensions and fears! To dream a fearful dream! To awake with a shout and a start! Such is not the rest of the righteous!

Day at last broke; light, bright morning light, filled the room by little and little, creeping at first slowly and timidly over one object after another; now showing a bedpost or at most the pair, then a wardrobe, then a picture on the wall, and

(To be continued.)

then, when the broad day had declared itself, he hurriedly arose, trembling like a guilty thing, and scarcely stopping to lave his parched lips and hands, nor to shave, barely to dress, and without murmuring a prayer, or daring to look up to heaven, he quitted the room, shutting fast the chamber door on those midnight horrors, and stealing down the stairs like a thief, past that room where the dead lay, and out at the street door —he fled the house.

A RUSSIAN FETE, BY ORDER OF THE EMPRESS CATHERINE II.

On the 28th of November, 1770, a grand masquerade was given at the winter palace of Her Imperial Majesty at St. Petersburg, to which 3,600 masques were invited. Twenty-one apartments of the building were thrown open for their reception, and the dancing and other amusements were carried on with great spirit until nine o'clock in the evening, when a flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of Apollo and the Four Seasons, accompanied by the Twelve Months of the Year.

These mythological characters were represented by children, varying from the ages of eight to eleven years, chosen from the *corps* of cadets, and from the national institution for the education of girls. They passed from the principal saloon into the five withdrawing rooms, and thence through the gallery into the apartment in which the Empress was seated, surrounded by the principal nobles of the Court.

On arriving in the imperial presence, Apollo pronounced the following discourse:—

“Grant, gracious Princess, that Apollo presents his homage, and undertakes the charge of conducting this fête, and preparing a repast for your Majesty, and this illustrious company.

“They have represented me at Rhodes under the figure of an enormous Colossus, heavy and clumsy, but I should not have dared to appear here in such guise. I

have preferred showing myself in miniature, lively, ingenious, and witty, accompanied by divinities who preside over the seasons, as gentle, and, for the most part, as petulant as myself, with all the attractions of smiling youth.

“Rest assured, august Sovereign, that we will employ the most scrupulous attention in superintending worthily the pleasures of this fête.

“I have already taken care to drive away from these precincts several divinities who had expressed an intention to be present, but whose generally exceptional conduct would have interrupted disagreeably our enjoyment. In consequence, I have entreated Great Jove to go to bed, and, for better security, I have placed Morpheus to guard his slumbers. Envy has been charged to entertain proud Juno, and will give her some uneasiness this evening by making her understand that her glory and greatness will be eclipsed outright here. This will prevent her quitting Olympus for the present. The god of Love, Mars, and Minerva, are masques, but it is easy to discover them. The gaiety of Momus had, at first, inspired me with the desire to include him in my suite, but I renounced the idea on reflecting that Folly, his attendant, should not be admired here; as a compensation, however, I perceived Decency, Laughter, and Fun, who were stealthily making their preparations to attend the ball. License and Caprice

desired also to attend, but I turned a deaf ear to their request.

"By order of Apollo, the following deities will alone be permitted to present themselves before this illustrious company:—

"Flora will bring her most agreeable gifts to decorate the table and dessert.

"Ceres will hand round the produce of the harvest.

"Bacchus, with the fat cheeks, will preside at the side table.

"Boreas, by order of Eolus, will blow away the hoar frost, and prevent its approach in the precincts of this festival.

"The Muses, Thalia, Terpsichore, Erato, and Euterpe will preside *incognito* at the amusements prepared for your Majesty and the noble guests."

Apollo then turning towards His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke, said:—

"Let Urania remain on high to read in the stars your great destinies. Your Imperial Highness will worthily fulfil them. You need only pursue the glorious career you have already followed, and we promise you success."

Apollo afterwards addressed the Prince of Russia in the following words:—

"Clio, too much occupied in celebrating the actions of your Royal Highness in the Temple of Memory, has not had time to accompany me here. I should never finish were I to inform you of the occupation you give to her recording pen."

Then, turning to the four divinities who attended him, he exclaimed—

"Amiable dispensers of the favours of the gods, offer them to the personages whom Destiny has thus honoured. Let tickets also be delivered to those who have been selected to perform the honours of the fêtes."*

As Apollo retired, Flora approached the Prince of Prussia, and said:—

"Royal Highness; a brilliant troop of maidens have already offered you flowers, which you accepted with gracious condescension. I felt exquisite pleasure in beholding these trophies of nature in your hands. The following morning I received various compliments on this subject from the celestial inhabitants of Olympus. The politeness of the gods, however, appeared

somewhat mingled with jealousy. Each one whispered to his neighbour, and I heard one say:—'Those flowers offered to the Prince were faded, they were badly arranged, and had lost their perfume!' I was disgusted with such pitiful jealousy, and to stop their chatter, I joined Apollo, and assisted him in preparing this fete. I arose in the early morning, in order to collect the most beautiful flowers, and present them to you myself. I was already thus occupied, when Destiny approached, and accosted me. 'Flora,' he said, 'leave these flowers and garlands, and employ your time in some more noble object. Go and celebrate the actions of great men, who have been useful to their fellow-creatures.' With open ear I listened to what he said, but glancing at my bouquets, I observed that a goddess could not change her attributes or character—when, offended with my resistance, he touched angrily the flowers intended for you, and which were speedily transformed into the object you now behold. Then, in an imposing voice, Destiny continued, 'You ought this day to be in attendance on Apollo, for he presides over the fine arts. Your offering shall be a casket containing medallions of heroes, to that person who has gained, by his virtues, the largest suffrages of his fellow-men, and the homage of his contemporaries. Posterity will be their echo.'

"Destiny has spoken, and I have only to obey. Flora, without a murmur, fulfills the command by thus bestowing this casket on your Royal Highness!"

This gift contained a collection of golden medals struck at St. Petersburg, from the foundation of the city.

Whilst Flora was thus offering her compliments, Boreas, Bacchus, and the Twelve Months had dispersed themselves through the apartments to present theirs to the other guests.

Discourse of Boreas to the Countess A. A. Tchernickeff:—

"Beauty has its empire over all hearts. Mine, such as it is, is entirely devoted to you. To convince you of my zeal, it is I who have pleaded the cause of your husband to Neptune and Eolus.*

"It is I who filled the sails of those vessels which made the floods roar, and the Mussulman tremble! But, lost pains! In vain have I laboured. You

* These persons were chosen to superintend twelve tables, each of which was dedicated to a month of the year. Upon each card was displayed the emblem of the month, and the name of the guest invited to that particular table.

* Count John Tchernickeff was Vice-President at the Admiralty College at St. Petersburg. The Countess, his wife, was eminently beautiful.

have not deigned to notice my services. Cruel one! I must then declare publicly my passion as well as my homage. Behold them now surrendered!"

Saying these words, Boreas escaped, leaving in the hands of the Countess a diamond ornament of great value.

The speech of Bacchus to M. Betskoy:—*

"It is I, sir, who lately broke in pieces the chain of your eye-glass. I avow it, for spite possessed me. He despises my gifts, I said to myself. He has lived until now without imbibing the delights of the grape, the source of gaiety and comfort to so many mortals. This water-drinking troubles me, and with that instrument which serves him instead of spectacles, is he not always occupied, poring over his nose at some regulations for the education of youth? He forgets what is due to my divine authority. Not one look or attempt at homage! I am by nature somewhat lively; the glass was broken, and I fled to wreak my anger at the convent and the academy, but my vengeance was disarmed on beholding the success of your various labours for humanity. As a retribution, I now surrender you your chain and eye-glass, perfectly restored, and of which you know how to make such good use."

The discourse of January to the Grand Duke:—

"Highness,—The first month of the year, since September has lost its priority of rank†—is only abundant in snows and icebergs. What, then, can it offer you? My object, however, must be to please. Nothing could be more worthily presented to you than the portrait of this beneficent deity of the North, who is equally great, whether the gates of the temple of Janus (whose name I bear) may be open or shut. Her glory will be perpetuated as long as this diamond will exist. It is to your Royal Highness that

* To understand this discourse, it should be explained that some time previous to this fête M. Betskoy, while reading to the Empress, let fall an eye-glass, the chain of which, composed of precious stones, was broken to pieces. This gentleman was also a determined enemy to fermented liquors. He had also originated several patriotic establishments for the education of youth. To him had been confided the management of this fête, and the Empress herself had ordered the present for him, and composed the address of Bacchus.

† It was Peter the Great who ordered that, throughout Russia, the year should commence on the first of January.

Destiny presents this gift, as to one who will one day march in her footsteps."

This present consisted of a ring with the portrait of the Empress, surrounded by diamonds.

February's address to Count N. I. Panine:—

"It is I who oblige you often to observe abstinence, although such is not very agreeable to you; but if I place difficulties in your way, you ought to feel obliged to me, since you succeed so well in overcoming them. I am the month that you hate.* My attributes are fish. But, nevertheless, I hold you in cordial esteem, and as a proof I present you with this token."

This was a snuff-box covered with diamonds, with the initials of the Empress on the lid.

The month of March to Count Z. G. Tchernicheff:—

(This nobleman was born in March, and fulfilled the functions of war minister).

"It is I who re-animate the ardour of warriors. Your innumerable cares have assisted me greatly. Receive, therefore, this mark of gratitude."

This gift was a snuff-box similar to the last.

April, to Mademoiselle C. A. Zinovieff:—

"Lady of the Court of Her Imperial Majesty,—If you were Europa I would immediately raise you on the bull, my emblem, and you would have the glory of having for once brought April, the most inconstant month of the year, to a decision. You will say, perhaps, that this is an absurd idea, but I have many such. Behold this mirror, it will show you whatever I please! Regard it attentively, and you will see therein your future fortunes. You will be happy, and this is not an April folly, I tell you, but the serious truth."

This present consisted of a box with a mirror in gold and enamelled frame. Upon the cover, a Gipsy was represented telling fortunes.

May, to the Princess M. W. Baratinsky:—

"I am esteemed the finest month in the year. Of the twins that represent me, one was crying the other day. I inquired the cause, and he gave me the

* The health of Count Panine could not support the fasting that commences almost always in the month of February. He superintended the department of foreign affairs.

following answer: 'Month of May, my dear master,—Take your precautions, for you are running great danger. A certain mortal I have seen will soon eclipse you.' I desired to know his name, but in vain, for he continued weeping, but spoke no more. Since I have seen you I have divined the person he alluded to. The excellence of your heart is only equalled by the brilliancy of your charms. No one could surely harm you; but, for greater security, I give you the attendants represented on this box.'

This gold and enamelled box was surmounted with a painting of the Graces, enclosed in brilliants.

June, to the Countess N. K. Razoumovski:—

"You love gaiety. No month could, therefore, approach you with a better grace than myself, for it is I who provide mirth and happiness for the live-long year. I had intended to borrow the form of the crayfish, by which I am represented; but when I reflected that this would be but a poor compliment to you, the acknowledged pattern of loveliness and elegance, I abstained. Besides, you might have ordered me for cooking, to the kitchen. Here is my gift. This case is filled with arrows, which you may point at whom you please."

June then offered an enamelled sheath, fitted with diamonds.

July, to the Countess C. P. Schouvaloff:—

"Amiable Countess,—Can the richest month of the year attract even for a moment your notice? Your sweetness has enchanted me. If the seasons were placed under your control, July would have no anxiety about the harvest. I have long sought an opportunity of telling you my thoughts, and I wish to prove my sincerity by craving your acceptance of this trifle."

This was a gold and enamelled box of great value.

August, to the Countess D. P. Tchernischoff:—

"I wish to address myself to you alone, for these other months are such idle chatterers. August will confine himself to few words, and merely say, he loves you, and in token gives you this cross. A ring might have given umbrage to his rivals."

A splendid cross of diamonds accompanied the delivery of this brief discourse.

September, to the Princess D. A. Galitzine:—

"The month of September of the past year, immortalized by the exploits of the Prince, your husband, has detached from the comet that preceded the peace of Chotine, a brilliant star for your acceptance, in testimony of his affection."

A superb diamond star was presented to the Princess.

October, to the Count G. G. Orloff:—

"It was I who first saw your eyes open to the world. Alcides presided at your birth, and endowed you with intelligence, wisdom, and courage; giving you also a heart great, good, and generous. He wished that, like his own, your glorious works should not appear at once, but show themselves gradually. But patience,—that which is delayed is not lost. Experience has given me some insight into the future, and I can predict, that not only your counsels will secure the favour of Neptune, but many occasions will yet present themselves to perpetuate the services you have rendered your country. Accept this vase, filled with water from the flood that causes heroes to forget the griefs they experience when they have no longer laurels to win."

The vase presented to the Count (who was the first who planned an expedition to the Mediterranean), was of solid gold, and filled with diamonds.

November, to the Countess P. A. Bruce:—

"November, you will say, ought not to address you; but know, beautiful Countess, that to please you nothing is impossible. I have robbed flowers from Spring and attached them to this watch, in order that every moment of your life may be enriched with flowers.

December, to Count Hordt.

"Destiny has made me the last month of the year, but my merit this evening will consist in making myself useful, and I therefore present to you this cloak of sables to preserve you from the insidious attacks of cold and ague."

After ten o'clock in the evening, her imperial Majesty, attended by the guests invited to the supper, proceeded to the great hall. In the midst of this apartment an oval building had been constructed, surrounded by twelve niches representing the twelve months of the year. A large gallery was erected around the interior, containing four orchestras, each having a separate staircase. The remainder of the hall was occupied by the masques, who promenaded as well as they were able, from the immense crowd

collected on this occasion. Behind the niches before mentioned, everything necessary for the service of the tables was arranged. The hall was illuminated by upwards of two thousand wax lights.

The tables were served as if by enchantment, and on the arrival of her Imperial Majesty, the most profound silence was observed by the guests throughout the vast and magnificent apartment, the trumpets sounding a royal salute, and Apollo conducting the Empress to the royal table. All being seated, Apollo again came forward and addressed a discourse to the company, which was followed by music, and dancing by children.

After dinner, the assembly retired to a theatre, which had been built expressly for this entertainment. Apollo, pointing to the first seat, addressed Diana, the Months, and Seasons, and requested them, "as divinities, not yielding to mortals," to occupy the place of honour. He then afterwards conducted the Empress to the richly decorated box prepared for her.

The curtain was slowly raised, and the comedy of the "Oracle" was performed

by children, chosen from the two institutions for the education of the nobility of both sexes. The piece was interspersed with dancing, and amusements of various kinds, which agreeably diversified the fête.

No sooner was the representation concluded, than the company, delighted with the pleasures of the evening, returned to the masquerade, which was continued with much enjoyment until six o'clock in the morning.

"This fête," observes, in continuation, the author of the manuscript, "has no need of praise, for the description alone will gratify all persons of taste and refinement. But what cannot be explained in writing, were the charming intelligence and graceful manners of the childish actors in the entertainment, who sustained their several parts through with great energy and judgment. The elegance, precision, and politeness of young Ouchakov, a boy of ten years, who represented Apollo, and was charged with the difficult task of superintending the classical portion of the fête, was the theme of eulogium of the whole assembly."

THE STORY OF ANNE BOLEYN.

It is well known that the schism which separated England from the Roman Church, was owing to the love of Henry VIII. for Anne Boleyn. The several historians vary greatly in their account of the life of this girl, whose rise and misfortunes have made her of such celebrity. She was the daughter of Sir Thomas Bullen, and of Joanna Clinton, daughter of Sir — Clinton, Baronet. Some writers affirm that King Henry VIII., being deeply enamoured with the wife of Sir Thomas Bullen, sent that nobleman on an embassy to France, that he might be less constrained in his passion, and that it was during the absence of the husband that the celebrated Anne Boleyn was born. Those writers also maintain that Henry had the same sentiments of love for Anne's eldest sister. This Anne, while things were thus going on, was forming herself so well, that even at the age of fifteen, following the examples of her family, gave herself up to both the steward and chaplain of her father. Her behaviour in France was such that she received the most vulgar nicknames. But when she returned to England, she behaved with so much prudence, as to induce Henry to make her his wife. This story of the early irregularities of Anne, which seems dictated by hatred, is contradicted by most historians, except that part which relates to her living in France, where she did go in company with Mary, queen of Louis XII., and where she served as maid of honour to Queen Claudia, and afterwards to the Duchess of Alençon. They, however, all agree that Anne Boleyn united with her personal grace the highest qualities of mind. As she was by her birth entitled to appear at court, she was soon admitted among the queen's maids of honour. She had a conversation with the king and inspired him with the most violent love. She succeeded in having her father made a lord. But it soon became evident that her true character had escaped the penetration of the most subtle of her courtiers. She was found to be deep and ambitious. She encouraged the love of the king by her gay and fawning manners, and when he attempted to declare his passion for her, she affected sentiments of such elevated purity as was capable of awing a man much less in love than Henry.

When she had excited him to the utmost extent, she would tell him that as she could never be his wife, she would not be his mistress. The king, however, was determined upon sharing his throne with her. But it was a difficult matter to obtain a divorce from the virtuous Catherine, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and for eighteen years his faithful wife. This princess was the widow of Prince Arthur, and with a dispensation of Pope Julius II. she afterwards married his brother Henry. Some say that Henry VII. compelled his son to this union; but supposing that to have been the case, it could no longer be alleged as an excuse for Henry VIII., as he had upon his accession to the throne taken the advice of his council, who upon mature deliberation decided upon Catherine remaining his wife, and he lived contentedly with her for many years without feeling the least remorse. It is true that he did not then love Anne Boleyn; and it was after his passion for her that he began to reproach himself for having married his brother's widow. He solicited Pope Clement VII. to declare his marriage contrary to both divine and human laws; and to assist in turning the opinion and judgment of the pontiff, he presented him the decisions of some divines, who had been bribed for the purpose. Cardinal Wolsey, the great favourite of the king, and who ruled the kingdom, entered at first into the wishes of Henry. But he only meant to procure him a divorce, as he found an opportunity thus of avenging himself upon the emperor, because he had not made him pope as he had promised. As soon as Wolsey was informed that Anne Boleyn was the object of that divorce, he sent word to the pope to refute the sentence which was solicited from him, as Anne Boleyn was suspected of being favourable to the errors of Luther. It was upon this information that the Cardinal Campegi, intrusted with the commission of publishing the so much wished for bull, committed it to the flames by order of the pope, and the affair was removed to Rome, which was the cause of Wolsey's disgrace. This haughty minister, who had seen himself treated with almost the respect due to a king, and had received the most flattering marks of honour from both the Em-

peror Charles V. and Francis I., who absolutely governed the kingdom of Great Britain, and saw the greatest noblemen crawling at his feet—this prelate, in fine, who was possessed of immense wealth, was stripped in a moment as it were by a woman, of all his offices, estates, riches, and power. We are induced to believe there can be no doubt that Anne Boleyn contributed greatly to his disgrace, as the following letter written to him in the place of his exile will show:—

"MY LORD,—However sensible a man you are thought to be, you are, nevertheless, much blamed by all for having merited the hatred of a king who had raised you to the highest position possible. I cannot conceive, and the king still less than I, that having assured us with so many promises of divorce, you should repent your design, and try to prevent a conclusion of it. What is the cause of such behaviour? You forsook the queen to favour my views, and after having given me the greatest marks of your affection, you forsake my interest to assume those of the queen. I must confess that I have placed too much confidence in you, and find myself deceived. But in future I will trust only to Heaven, and the love of my dear king, who alone can rectify the wrongs you have done me, and place me in that happy position that God will protect, and that the king wishes me to occupy. The injury you have done me has caused me the deepest sorrow; but I feel indignant at the thought that I have been betrayed by a man who was interested in me for no other purpose than to find out the secrets of my heart. I confess, that believing you to be sincere, I was too hasty in disclosing them to you. The remembrance of this will moderate my revengeful feelings towards you, as I cannot forget I was once your servant.

"ANNE BOLEYN."

Henry, however, did not abandon his project; and it is probable he might have succeeded in his solicitations for a divorce, had not Queen Catherine been the aunt of the Emperor Charles V. That powerful prince prevented the pope from yielding to the wishes of the king. Henry conferred upon Anne Boleyn the title of Marchioness of Pembroke, which gave her precedence over the countess. To this honour he added a magnificent palace, richly furnished, and a more

brilliant household than that of the royal princess.

Meanwhile, the unfortunate but virtuous Catherine was exiled from court, forsaken by every one, because she was deprived of authority, and reduced to seek consolation in her tears and her virtue. Rebuked and fatigued with the constant delays and evasions of the court of Rome, Henry had the important question decided by Thomas Cranmer, whom he had just invested with the archbishopric of Canterbury, and married Anne Boleyn. This act irritated the pope beyond measure, and after many delays, the sovereign pontiff issued a bull of excommunication against Henry. Henry, however, resolved to show the pope how little he cared for this act, and so declared himself absolute chief of the church and clergy of his kingdom, and seized upon all their estates and revenues. The Bishop Fisher and the celebrated Chancellor Morris, who refused to acquiesce in such an innovation, were decapitated.

Things were in this situation, when Anne Boleyn presented herself in tears before Henry, and told him that it was a source of much affliction to her to foresee that the Princess Mary, daughter of Catherine, should succeed to the throne in preference of Elizabeth, her daughter. Henry, softened by the tears of his adored wife, promised not only to disinherit Mary, but even to put her to death. Fortunately, however, this prince spared the life of Mary, but proclaimed throughout his kingdom an act that declared Mary incapable of succeeding to the crown, and with great pomp Elizabeth was proclaimed his lawful heiress. Love, which had done so much for Anne Boleyn, seemed to have made her ascend the throne only to render her fall more wonderful. There was at that time, among the ladies of honour of the queen, a young person of rare merit and beauty, named Jane Seymour. Her charms made a deep impression on the heart of Henry, who was too weak to resist it, and who, perhaps, was already tired of Queen Anne. Engrossed with this new passion, he gave a favourable ear to all the speeches that tended to injure the character of that princess. Anne Boleyn gave some occasion for these suspicions, for she was suspected of being too familiar with several lords. The king entertained no doubt of her guilt, and accused her in the House of Peers; and she was then confined a close prisoner. It was in that

melancholy situation that the following letter was penned:—

“SIR—The displeasure of your grace, and my imprisonment, are things so strange to me that I know not how to write or excuse myself. But let not your grace even imagine that your poor wife will ever consent to acknowledge a fault that I am innocent of. Never had a prince a more loyal wife, in all true affection and duty, than you have had in Anne Boleyn. Never have I in my exaltation forgotten that I might find such a change as this, knowing that my preferment was only founded on your grace's fancy. You have chosen me from a low estate to be your queen and companion—far beyond my desert and desire. If, then, you have found me worthy of such honour, let not any high fancy or bad counsel of mine enemies withdraw your princely favour from me. Neither let that unworthy stain of a disloyal heart towards your grace ever cast so foul a blot on your most dutiful wife, and the infant princess, your daughter. Try me, good king, and let not my sworn enemies sit as my judges and accusers. Yea, let me receive an open trial, for my truth fears no shame; then shall you see either my innocence cleared, the ignominy and slander of the world dropped, or my guilt openly declared. But if you have already determined that not only my death, but an infamous slander, will bring you the enjoyment of your desired happiness, then I desire of God that he will pardon your great sin and also those of my enemies, and that he will not call you to a strict account of your cruel conduct towards me, at his judgment seat, where both you and myself must shortly appear. My last and only request shall be that I alone may suffer your displeasure, and that it may not extend to those innocent men

who are imprisoned for my sake. If ever I have found favour in your sight—if ever the name of Anne Boleyn has been pleasing to your ears—then grant me this request, and I will not trouble your grace any further. With my earnest prayers to the Trinity, to have your grace in His good keeping, and to direct you in all your actions, From my doleful prison in the Tower, this 6th of May, 1536.

“Your most loyal,

“And ever faithful wife,

“ANNE BOLEYN.”

This letter made no impression upon the heart of Henry, his resolution was irrevocably taken, and knowing that he could not marry Jane Seymour while Anne was living, he resolved upon the death of the latter. On the depositions of some witnesses, the parliament condemned the queen to lose her head. Mr. Hume seems to entertain no doubt of the innocence of Anne Boleyn. Some historians affirm that she confessed that she had contracted some engagements with Percy, but they add that having been condemned to be burnt alive, she was given to understand that this confession would only change her sentence to that of being beheaded. When the judgment was read to her she evinced a remarkable degree of courage and composure. Before she ascended the scaffold she sent her last message to the king, to thank him for the care he still took to contribute to her further elevation; for said she, “From being a mere gentlewoman, you made me a marchioness, from a marchioness a queen, and from a queen you wish now to make me a saint.” This unfortunate queen had the grief to learn before she died, that all those who had been imprisoned as her accomplices were put to death.

THE DOBBS FAMILY IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER VII.

HONOURABLE JOHN DOBBS' SPEECH IN CONGRESS—FRANCIS F. BLAIR—JOHN COVODE—JUDGE KELLY.

THE day before it was intended that Dobbs should make his speech in the House, that gentleman, his wife, and Ruggles were in earnest consultation. The two latter had been co-labouring for some days back to produce a speech for Dobbs, who was until this time in ignorance as to its character. Ruggles was at table, pen in hand, and in fine frenzy, capping the framework of his intellectual structure with a large roof of spirited declamation. The production, in its relative proportions, was something like a comet, with its large tail and little body, and in its extravagant sentiments and high-sounding words worthy of the happiest efforts of Roger A. Pryor. His hair more bristling than usual, and the light of inspiration shining from his eyes, Ruggles finished the document with a flourish, and handed it over to Mrs. Dobbs for inspection, who, after looking at the closing paragraph, observed—

"Don't you think it a little strong, Mr. Ruggles?"

"I cannot say that it is, Mrs. Dobbs; but I have the *cacoethes scribendi* on me now, and will be more competent to judge when I am cooled off. Still, our constituency must be peppered and salted to an amazing degree, and I am inclined to think that this speech—considering for what it is intended—is a *βυλλιε βιγ γαγ*," said Ruggles, who was at times fond of a bit of the classics, and would indulge himself in an allusion of this kind, although he should thereby subject himself to the charge of pedantry. "I have faith in your good sense, however, Mrs. Dobbs: express yourself freely."

"Is it not a little too spread-eagle?" ventured Mrs. Dobbs; "and would it not be well to tone it down a little in this respect?"

"Ah," said Ruggles, "you wish to clip the outstretched wings of that proud bird which soars in glorious independence—"

"Mr. Ruggles," interrupted Mrs. D., a little nettled, "pray remember that

you are not speaking through the *Trumpet*, nor haranguing the voters—"

"But to a remarkably shrewd, sensible woman like yourself, Mrs. Dobbs. You ask if it be not too strong. Permit me to answer Yankee fashion, by asking you a question. Supposing you were a merchant, and you understood there was a great demand for pumpkins in a certain locality, and a demand for nothing else: would you send there a cargo of some finer production, such as lemons, citrons, or something of that kind?"

"Certainly not; what a question!"

"The demand regulates the supply, is a commercial axiom all the world over," resumed Ruggles, "and you cannot force the market, no more than you can force people to eat what is nauseating to them. You may say that the demand is disadvantageous to civilization, and not up with the progress of the age, but it is not your business as a merchant to attempt to reform the demands of the people, and incur the risk of loss, but to supply them. Pardon me, but I know the market in our district, and just such a speech as this suits it. It is not made, my dear madam, for the Boston market, where they, of course, would turn up their noses at it, nor for you, nor me, nor for the House, but for home consumption—for the sovereigns of our district, who are my masters and yours."

Mrs. Dobbs said nothing further on this point, and Ruggles continued—

"Although Mr. Dobbs has given notice, and will be entitled to the floor at his appointed hour, it will require considerable determination to make a stand and not be crowded down when he is up. Do you feel equal to the occasion, Mr. Dobbs?" said Ruggles, turning to that gentleman, who answered in a hazy, mechanical way—

"I'll tell you to-morrow."

"But speak your mind, husband," said his partner; "you forget you are at home."

"What was the question, my dear?" asked Dobbs, brightening up.

"Are you afraid of breaking down in reading this speech to-morrow?" said Mrs. D., putting the question in a more comprehensible form.

"You have told me what to do, my

dear—it's simple enough. I am a tolerable reader, you know; when I was at school I was reckoned as a good hand at that sort of thing. I recollect I read 'Robinson Crusoe' aloud to the boys, because we only had one copy among us, and they liked to hear me read, because I always minded my stops. Although your speech is not nearly so interesting as 'Robinson Crusoe,' I think I can manage it very well, that is if you make the stops plain."

"Mr. Dobbs," said Ruggles, enthusiastically, "the entire absence of self-consciousness in you is something akin to genius. Extremes meet in you."

The old gentleman did not seem clearly to understand him, and his face assumed its usual hazy expression, as his mind doubtless dwelt on the beauties of "Robinson Crusoe."

The next day Mrs. Dobbs and Ruggles took their seats on one of the front benches of the gallery, where they could have a good view of Dobbs. While waiting for Dobbs' appointed hour, Ruggles, in compliance with Mrs. Dobbs' request, proceeded to give that lady some account of several of the members below.

"The off-hand member," he began, "in a sort of half-military suit, who is always twirling a pair of sandy moustaches, is Mr. Francis P. Blair, of the well-known Blair family, the members of which are characterized by hard heads with practical ideas inside of them, and always standing shoulder to shoulder, and pushing together in perfect harmony. Blair senior has the credit of directing the movements of the juniors and setting them on, and has a more extensive political experience, perhaps, than any other man in the country, by which his sons evidently have profited. This one, Frank, inherits all the old gentleman's energy, with a good share of his ability, is full of *rim*, and does not know what fear is. He is not at all thin skinned, the cuticle of his sensibilities being hardened and tempered by the fires of vituperation which he has gone through on the stump, for in the West it is no child's play to demand the suffrages of the people. It is a good deal like standing up to be shot at, the speaker being a fair target for a running commentary of all kinds of remarks while he is spreading the wings of the eagle, and when he is through, like as not charged by his antagonist with being one of the greatest scoundrels that ever walked unhung. The result is, that the

aspiring politician either breaks down altogether under the scathing fire of these campaigns, and goes back to the shades of private life, sorry that he ever ventured out of them, or he becomes hardened and bullet-proof to such a degree that he can hear his character assailed on every side with perfect equanimity, and be told without a wince that he is a great rascal. Mr. Blair has passed through this ordeal, and been tempered to the invulnerable point. As the pioneer of emancipation sentiment in Missouri he is deserving of the thanks of the country—he was the entering wedge between the slavery-loving power and the old prejudices of the people in that State, and insinuated himself so adroitly that he split the old parties and secured a *point d'appui* to lay around him right and left in the cause of freedom. Political education is of slow growth, and requires gingerly care to bring it into full blossom. When Blair first broke ground in Missouri, he inscribed on his standard BENTON, and planted himself squarely and firmly on the old man's popularity. The forces of Blair were next marshalled into campaign under the name of Free Democracy; for though the ear would have been shocked with the name of Republican, the mind was becoming familiarized with the principle; and what mattered the name to Blair? 'a rose by any other name,' &c. Becoming bolder with increasing strength, the chieftain finally flung out the banner of emancipation, won another victory, and found himself again at the capital. He has already been with our western army fighting the rebellion, where he intends soon to be again, it is said. He was with General Lyon during that short but most brilliant campaign of the war. Ah, what action—what push there was in that general! By Jove, his death is the greatest loss the nation has suffered since the breaking out of this business. And what a terrible mistake it was to attach him as a mere appendage to Fremont, when he should have been the head of the military organization, at least in the State where he had been operating so successfully!"

"Are you not allowing yourself considerable latitude in discussing Mr. Blair?" asked Mrs. Dobbs.

"Right, Mrs. Dobbs, as you generally are. I am apt to digress occasionally, and require to be checked up."

"The farmer-like, oldish-looking man,"

resumed Ruggles, "is John Covode, of Pennsylvania, who was boasted before the people as chairman of the Buchanan investigating committee. A plain, blunt man, who has enjoyed but few advantages in the way of education, and a revolutionist by nature. He has no reverence for law and order, and is a reconstructionist without the ability to reconstruct. His views are narrow, of which, like men of his stamp, he is very tenacious; he rejoices, too, in the exercise of power. He is chairman of the committee on the conduct of the war—a position, with his proclivities, well suited to his taste;—the power of sending for papers and summoning witnesses at will, being a delectable proceeding for one so fond of exercising authority. He has a plain, honest way with him in talking, which is rather attractive to some portions of the rural districts, and which has secured for him a certain degree of personal popularity. Mr. Covode has been a persistent and bitter opponent of General M'Clellan, whose character he has assailed on every occasion in public and private. In company with the other members of the war committee, he visited Manassas, and investigated matters there after the evacuation to his own satisfaction in a few hours, and returned with a series of resolutions in his hat, which he prepared at once to lay before Congress, and thereby sweep M'Clellan from the military chess-board altogether; but the resolutions were so unfair and so coloured with prejudice, that his colleagues, thinking that if they were allowed to go before the country the effect would be more damaging to the committee than the general, persuaded him to abandon the idea of presenting them. He has a contempt for West Point, which he takes no pains to conceal; and he believes that the military profession can be adopted without any particular previous training, and followed with success. It is said, indeed, on one occasion that he made a proposition to the President to capture the batteries at Aquia Creek, which were at the time in possession of the enemy, by contract, if the President would allow him a certain number of men. Mr. Covode is, doubtless, very sincere in his desire to save the Union, but like many others he has a queer way of going about it."

"I believe you speak of Mr. Covode in a partizan spirit, and think I should receive your account of him with some

grains of allowance," said Mrs. Dobbs, archly.

"I have given you only my opinion, from which you will find others who differ—there are some people up in Pennsylvania, for instance, who regard John Covode as a modern Lycurgus," answered Ruggles.

"When you wish to hear some particularly good talking," resumed that gentleman, "come here when Judge Kelly of Philadelphia is to speak, and you will hear the most accomplished orator of this body. There are, perhaps, men of greater calibre here than Mr. Kelly, but none with his elegant, finished style of eloquence. He has taste in the selection of words and fluency in uttering them, and his voice is deep and full. He may be reckoned as the Demosthenes of the House."

"But see, Mr. Dobbs is about to commence," said Mrs. D., when the attention of both was directed to the movements of that gentleman, who promptly arose from his seat according to instructions, but simultaneously with three or four others. Dobbs, however, at length arrested the attention of Mr. Grow with his stentorian cry of "Mr. Speaker," who at once proclaimed that "The gentleman from — has the floor," whereupon the member from Dobbstown with dignity and deliberation smoothed out his MS., wiped his spectacles with the bandanna, adjusted the same carefully, and took a calm survey of the House. The portly form and front of Jove were imposing. The bony, industrious member from the West ceased shoving his hand with the muscular movement over the paper, laid down his pen, cocked his lanky legs over his desk, took a fresh quid of tobacco, assured himself that the spittoon was within hitting distance, and prepared to listen. A little page tripped off and returned in a trice with a glass of water which he placed on the desk in front of the new member. Within a radius of half a dozen gentlemen from Dobbs, comparative quiet reigned, but beyond noise incessant, and no notice taken of the new member, who was so tardy in commencing that the Speaker rattled out with some impatience, in his auctioneer tone—

"Mr. Dobbs has the floor. Will the gentleman proceed?"

To which the new member replied—

"I am waiting for the House to listen to me, sir."

"Ha! ha! ha!" came from all parts

of the chamber. In strong contrast with the gaiety below was the anguish depicted on the face of Mrs. Dobbs as she sat in the gallery with Ruggles. She whispered hurriedly to her companion—

"The ridicule will be too much for him,—he will break down! Can't you save him, Mr. Ruggles?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" still came up from below.

"Unfortunate remark," said Ruggles. "Preposterous to suppose they would listen to any one down there. Why, they would hardly listen to the great Daniel. But hear, some are crying, 'Good! good!' They think he is joking—they take him for a dry joker; and see, he is not the least embarrassed; indeed, I never saw him more at his ease. He will do, Mrs. Dobbs, don't be at all anxious."

It was true they thought him a *farceur*, especially as he joined a little in the general hilarity himself, seeing the risible disposition around him. The worthy man had no idea of the cause of the merriment, but laughed because he saw others laughing. His inquiring look at length caught Mrs. Dobbs' troubled, anxious face, which brought him back to instructions, and he immediately commenced reading the speech in a loud, deliberate tone.

For nearly an hour Mr. Dobbs held forth with some fervour, pausing now and then to wipe the perspiration from his face with the bandanna. The closing paragraph, referring to the President's proclamation, written in Ruggles' fine-writing style, for home consumption, was pronounced in real sledge-hammer fashion, as follows:—

"Three millions of crushed spirits will soon awake to the glorious privileges which await them, and shake the manacles from their hands. A sable Brutus will rise in every hamlet and proclaim the freedom of a down-trodden race, and the friends of liberty will join hands in dealing one ponderous and final blow to this pandemonium institution, and destroy it utterly from the face of the land. Then, beware, despots of the old world, who have lent your aid and sympathy to vitalize this curse upon our country, beware! for your turn will come next—the avenging Nemesis of outraged nature will pursue you even to your unrighteous thrones and strike you down!"

As the orator resumed his seat, he looked up to where his wife sat, saw an approving smile, and was content.

Ruggles had been delectably entertained—no one certainly had listened with as much pleasure as he. He had frequently during the pauses called Mrs. Dobbs' attention to this and that part with—

"Not bad, that, Mrs. Dobbs. Prettily turned, rather, eh? He does justice to the subject. I shall have it published entire in the *Trumpet*, with an editorial commentary."

As Mr. Dobbs wiped the perspiration from his face, the lanky Western member held out his hand and congratulated him on being one of the right sort.

Thus ended Dobbs' triumph.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WHITE HOUSE—ITS OCCUPANTS—
JOHN ADAMS—MRS. ADAMS—THOMAS
JEFFERSON—JAMES MADISON—MRS.
MADISON—JAMES MONROE—JOHN
QUINCY ADAMS—ANDREW JACKSON—
THE MRS. EATON IMBROGLIO—MARTIN
VAN BUREN—WILLIAM HENRY HARRI-
SON—JOHN TYLER—JAMES K. POLK—
GENERAL TAYLOR—MILLARD FILL-
MORE—FRANKLIN PIERCE—JAMES
BUCHANAN—MISS LANE—PRESIDENT
LINCOLN—THE SATURDAY RECEPTIONS
—PRESENTATION OF THE DOBBS—MRS.
LINCOLN.

WHATEVER may be the opinion of critics in reference to other public buildings in the capital, they find few, if any, faults in the architecture of the executive mansion. It is simple, spacious, and elegant—just such a dwelling as the chief magistrate of a republic should have. The site is well chosen, upon rising ground, the front looking upon the avenue, and the back upon the extensive gardens attached to the house. From behind, the building is more imposing, as it presents there three stories to the spectator, on account of the slope, while in front there are but two. The grounds in the rear are tastefully laid out in walks and lawns, and planted with rare trees. One evening in the week in summer, the marine band, which is quite famous for its musical talent, plays for an hour or two in these gardens, which on such occasions are pretty well filled with visitors. From the back portico of the building a fine view is presented of the "Mall," Washington Monument, Smithsonian Institute, the Potomac river, and in the distance Arlington heights. "The White House is one hundred and seventy feet front, and eighty-

six deep; it is built of freestone, painted white, with Ionic pilasters, comprehending two lofty stories of rooms, crowned with a balustrade. The north front is ornamented with a portico of four Ionic columns in front, and a projecting screen with three columns. The outer intercolumniation is for carriages; the middle space is the entrance for visitors who come on foot; the steps from both lead to a broad platform in front of the door of entrance. The garden front is varied by having a rusticated basement story under the Ionic ordonnance, and by a semicircular projecting colonnade of six columns, with two flights of steps leading from the ground to the level of the principal story. In the interior, the north entrance opens immediately into a spacious hall of forty by fifty feet. Advancing through a screen of Ionic columns, apparently of white marble, but only an imitation, the door in the centre opens into the oval room or saloon, of forty by thirty feet. Adjoining this room are two others, each thirty by twenty-two feet in size. These form a suite of apartments devoted to occasions of ceremony. The great banqueting, or as it is now generally called, the east room, occupies the whole depth of the east side of the mansion, and is eighty feet long by forty feet wide, with a clear height of twenty-two feet."

The rules by which the President, officers of the government, and representatives of foreign powers are governed in their intercourse with each other, are embraced in the following code:—

"The President."—Business calls are received at all times and hours, when the President is unengaged. The morning hours are preferred. Special days and evenings are assigned, each season, for calls of respect—one morning and evening a week being usually assigned for this purpose.

"Receptions are held, during the winter season, generally once a week, between eight and ten o'clock in the evening, at which time guests are expected in full dress, and are presented by the usher.

"The President holds public receptions on the first day of January and the fourth of July, when the diplomatic corps present themselves in court costume, and the officers of the army and navy in full uniform. The executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the government are received between the hours of eleven and twelve, after which the diplomatic corps,

officers of the army and navy, and civilians *en masse*.

"The President accepts no invitations to dinner, and makes no calls or visits of ceremony, but is at liberty to visit without ceremony at his pleasure.

"An invitation to dinner at the President's must be accepted in writing, and a previous engagement cannot take precedence.

"The address of the executive in conversation is, *Mr. President*.

"The Vice-President."—A visit from the Vice-President is due to the President on the meeting of Congress. He is entitled to the first visit from all others, which he may return by card or in person.

"The Supreme Court."—The judges call upon the President and Vice-President annually upon the opening of the court, and on the first day of January.

"The Cabinet."—Members of the President's cabinet call upon the President on New Year's-day and the fourth of July. First calls are also due from them, by card or in person, to the Vice-President, judges of the Supreme Court, senators, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, on the meeting of Congress.

"The Senate."—Senators call in person upon the President and Vice-President on the meeting of Congress and first day of January, and upon the President on the fourth of July, if Congress is in session. They also call in person or by card upon the judges of the Supreme Court, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, on the meeting of Congress.

"The Speaker of the House of Representatives."—The Speaker calls upon the President on the meeting of Congress, first day of January, and the fourth of July, if Congress is in session. The first call is also due from him to the Vice-President on the meeting of Congress.

"The House of Representatives."—Members of the House of Representatives call in person upon the President on the first day of January, and upon the Speaker of the House at the opening of each session. They also call, by card or in person, upon the President on the fourth of July, if Congress is in session, and upon the President, Vice-President, judges of the Supreme Court, cabinet officers, senators, Speaker of the House, and foreign ministers, soon after the opening of each session of Congress.

"Foreign Ministers."—The diplomatic corps call upon the President on the first

day of January, and upon the Vice-President, cabinet officers, judges of the Supreme Court, senators, and Speaker of the House, by card or in person, on the first opportunity after presenting their credentials to the President. They also make an annual call of ceremony, by card or in person, upon the Vice-President, judges of the Supreme Court, senators, and Speaker of the House, soon after the meeting of Congress.

"The Court of Claims."—The judges of the Court of Claims call in person upon the President on the first of January and the fourth of July. They also make first visits to cabinet officers and the diplomatic corps, and call, by card or in person, on the judges of the Supreme Court, senators, Speaker, and members of the House, soon after the meeting of Congress.

"The Families of Officials."—The rules which govern officials are also applicable to their families in determining the conduct of social intercourse."

During the early days a set of rules on etiquette for the Presidential mansion, differing very much from the foregoing, were adopted, which bore the mark of Jefferson, and consequently were exceedingly democratic, the idea being as much as possible to level all distinctions. This etiquette business bothered the heads of the old statesmen not a little. Adams became so much excited about it that he addressed a letter to the then Secretary of State protesting against the levelling process, as contained in the rules, by which he lost a little political capital—the opposition straightway denouncing him as an aristocrat. Washington, it seems, referred questions on points of etiquette to others, usually Jefferson, Adams, and Hamilton.

The stout, unflinching, unconquerable John Adams was the first occupant of this house—the man with "the clearest head and firmest heart of any cotemporary in Congress"—the Colossus in the memorable debate on the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, who worked through that "present gloom for the future glory" of the nation—the pillar which upheld in that stormy discussion nobly the cause of freedom and independence. As Jefferson remarked that, although he was the author of the Declaration, John Adams was the man to whom the country is mainly indebted for its passage.

Shortly after the Adams family had taken up their quarters in the new mansion, Mrs. Adams, not over well pleased

with the accommodations of the new establishment, wrote of the same to her daughter as follows:—

"The house is upon a grand and superb scale, requiring about thirty servants to attend and keep the apartments in proper order, and perform the ordinary business of the house and stables—an establishment very well proportioned to the President's salary. The lighting of the apartments, from the kitchen to parlours and chambers, is a tax indeed, and the fires we are obliged to keep to secure us from daily agues is another very cheering comfort. To assist us in this great castle and render less attendance necessary, bells are wholly wanting, not one single one being hung through the whole house, and promises are all you can obtain. This is so great an inconvenience that I know not what to do or how to do. . . .

"The house is made habitable, but there is not a single apartment finished, and all within side, except the plastering, has been done since P. came. We have not the *least fence, yard, or convenience without*, and the great unfinished audience-room I make a drying-room of to hang up the clothes in."

The new mansion rather excited the ire of the old-timed men on account of its "palatial dimensions and appearance," and the "extravagant" sums employed in its construction. The impression then prevailed that the house was too large, and now that it is, if anything, too small for the increased wants of the executive. The family of the elder Adams occupied only a portion of the building, and lived in a quiet way, but entertained, in imitation of Washington, with the wine and cake hospitalities. President Adams, personally, disliked levées, but held them on principle. He was not given to general intimacies, but confined his confidences and friendship pretty much to the members of his own family. Men usually have a receptacle for their inward thoughts and reflections, and Mrs. Adams' sympathizing ear was ever ready to hear the complaints and plans of her husband. Jefferson communicated his thoughts to intimate friends, some of whom afterwards used them against him, but John Adams confided without fear his private and political secrets to his wife, who stood nearly on an intellectual level with him, and could therefore, when occasion required, which was often enough, advise and reason with her indomitable husband.

When his second term expired, and it

was his courteous duty to receive his successor before quitting the Executive mansion, such was the bitterness with which he regarded the incoming President, Jefferson, that he made off to Massachusetts, to avoid being present at the triumph of his rival. For thirteen years this party feud kept them apart, when at the end of that time they were brought together through the kind offices of Mrs. Adams and others—Jefferson making the first advances.

In one of his letters to his wife, Adams spoke of being able to resign himself with a good grace to the tranquil enjoyments of private life, in the event of his not being elected to the Presidency. When he did eventually repair to his quiet home in Massachusetts he was thrust there, still longing for the sceptre. He was of too active a temperament to remain idle, and so took to writing letters, pamphlets, and newspaper articles, and to advising with his son John Quincy, whose rising political fortunes were some recompense to him for what he considered the unwarranted abuse the party had heaped upon him during the last days of his administration.

Parton sketches John Adams' character pithily but extravagantly, thus:—“Glorious, delightful, honest John Adams! An American John Bull! The Comic Uncle of the exciting drama. The reader, if a playgoer, knows well the fiery old gentleman who goes blustering and thundering about the stage, grasping his stick till it quivers, throwing the lovers into a terrible consternation, hurrying on the catastrophe he is most solicitous to prevent, pluming himself most of all upon his sagacity, while he alone is blind to what is passing under his very nose! Such is something like the impression left upon the mind of one who becomes familiar with the characters of this period respecting the man who, as Franklin well said, was always honest, often great, and sometimes mad. Think of a President of the United States, who, while his countrymen were in the temper of 1797 and 1798, could, in a public address, allude to his having had the *honour* once to stand in the presence of the British king! It is simply amusing now to read of his having done so; but to the maddened Republicans of that era it seemed the last degree of abject pusillanimity toward England and arrogant insult to the people of America. Think also of a President of the United States who could

see, without interference, a fellow-citizen prosecuted, convicted, and fined a hundred dollars for *wishing* that the wadding of a certain cannon fired to salute the President, as he passed through Newark, had lodged upon an ample part of the President's ample person! One of his own cabinet told Hamilton that the ‘chief was a man who, whether sportful, playful, witty, kind, cold, drunk, sober, angry, easy, stiff, jealous, careless, cautious, confident, close, or open, is so almost always in the wrong place, and to the wrong persons.’ . . . In the revolutionary period this high-mettled game-cock of a John Adams appeared to glorious advantage, made a splendid show of fight, animated the patriotic heart, and gave irresistible impetus to the cause. But he was ludicrously unfitted to preside with dignity and success over a popular Government which must do everything with an eye to its effect upon the people. His own cabinet intrigued against him; they regarded Hamilton as their real chief; and Hamilton, far more than Adams, *was* the influencing mind of the Government. . . . In one word, John Adams was not in unison with the humour of the age; and being a passionate, dogmatical, obstinate John Bull of a man, he took not the slightest pains to conceal the fact, or to conciliate the people with whom he had to do.”

Of Mrs. Adams, Randall writes:—“Her lofty lineaments carried a trace of the Puritan severity. They were those of the helmed Minerva, and not of the cestus-girdled Venus. Her correspondence uniformly exhibits a didactic personage—a little inclined to assume a sermonizing attitude, as befitted the well-trained and self-reliant daughter of a New England country clergyman—and a little inclined, after the custom of her people, to return thanks that she had not lot or part in anything that was not of Massachusetts. Perhaps the masculinity of her understanding extended somewhat to the firmness of her temper. But towering above, and obscuring these minor angularities, she possessed a strength of intellectual and moral character which commands our unqualified admiration. Her decision would have manifested itself for her friend or her cause, when softer spirits would have shrunk away or been paralyzed with terror. When her New England frigidity gave way and kindled into enthusiasm, it was not the burning straw but

the red-hot steel. On the stranding deck, at the gibbet's foot, in any other deadly pass where undaunted moral courage can light up the coming gloom of 'the valley and shadow of death,' Mrs. Adams would have stood by the side of those she loved, uttering words of encouragement; in that more desperate pass where death or overthrow are balanced against dishonour, she would have firmly bade the most loved friend on earth embrace the former like a bride."

The gifted, lion-hearted, incorruptible John Adams died at a ripe old age on the 4th of July, and his last words were "Thomas Jefferson still survives."

Jefferson, the founder of Democracy, and strenuous advocate of States' rights and the equality of the people, became the next occupant of the White House. The new President, an aristocrat by nature and a democrat by principle, had long looked with aversion on what he considered smacked of monarchism in the administrations of Washington and Adams, and as soon as he took the reins of government in hand he effected important changes in some of the domestic features of the White House. He abolished curls, powder, and levées, wore pantaloons and straight hair, and seldom rode in his state carriage drawn by the four famous blooded bays, thinking it too aristocratic a mode of conveyance, but either walked or rode on horseback, of which he was very fond. John Adams had held two regular levées every week, in which a certain pomp and ceremony were observed. These levées were numerously attended, and the ladies, more particularly, were loth to give them up, and Jefferson was besought to continue these pleasant reunions, but the great democrat would not relent. The custom of communicating the first addresses of the Executive to the Legislative branch of the Government in person, was done away with. One of his admirers writes: "Thus the pageant of the 'King's speech,' as it had been called—the stately cavalcade attending the President to the Capitol, and in due time the procession of Congress back to the President with their 'addresses,' were for ever swept away. The levées and some other ceremonials, borrowed from the customs of England, were already gone. The days of state ceremonials had passed.

"The Republicans rejoiced in this as if some substantive particles of royalty had been obliterated. The Federalists

mourned as if some important props of social and civil order had been torn away. Both probably attached undue consequence to the subject. Such forms are only important as they indicate national feeling. Both sides should have known that a little tinsel and parade could neither make nor guide the great currents of national sentiment, and that the shadow would necessarily conform to the substance. The same political and social traditions which for ages had taught that the many were made to be controlled by the few—that powdered wigs and gold buckles, if they did not prove intelligence and wisdom in the individual, indicated it in the class—had also taught that pomp and pageantry were necessary to impress the popular mind and command the popular reverence. But when this whole system fell, what was either the further use or the further danger of its trappings? They could not restore *ancien régime*, nor could they control unwigged and unpowdered democracy. They had lost their appropriateness, their signification, their motive; and they required no violent effort for their displacement. They had fallen of themselves, and were as foreign to the new order of things as are the fancifully ornamented costumes of ancestors found in old wardrobes—which were brave and becoming in their day, but which would provoke unbounded merriment from the spectators if worn now. The stately ceremonials of Washington's administration were appropriate to the times; and we confess that they seem to us not unbefitting the man. This was our heroic epoch—the half-mythical epoch of nation-founders. We cannot, like the ancients, translate the latter to demigods. But it seems to us very harmless that they should drift down the tide of tradition, associated in the national memory with scenic accompaniments, which in the distance appear grand and high. We never expect to see Washington painted on the canvas in pantaloons and a round hat. We should as soon think of quarrelling with the costume as with the manners of the first Presidency."

As it is the object here to glance only at the inner or domestic life of those who dwelt in the White House, it may not be inappropriate to give Randall's account of a little domestic breeze which ruffled the placid current of domestic affairs in the mansion during Jefferson's time, and

to which the following extract of a letter from Moore the poet serves as a fit preface:—

"I stopped at Washington with Mr. and Mrs. Merry for near a week; they have been treated with the most pointed incivility by the present democratic President, Mr. Jefferson; and it is only the precarious situation of Great Britain which could possibly induce it to overlook such indecent, though at the same time, petty hostility. I was presented by Mr. Merry to both the Secretary of State and the President."

"The indecent and petty hostility" to Mr. and Mrs. Merry was manifested in this wise. They were invited to dine at the President's. When dinner was announced Mr. Jefferson chanced to be standing by and talking with Mrs. Madison, at some distance from Mrs. Merry, and he accompanied the former to the table. Mr. Merry regarded this as almost an insult. Such a stir was made by the angry ambassador, that Madison wrote Monroe (who had succeeded Mr. King as our minister to England), apprising him of the facts to enable him to answer an expected call of the British Government for official explanations."

* * Nothing, however, came of it. "Mrs. Merry tossed her head without shaking the peace of two nations, and poor Mrs. Madison was saved from involuntarily 'firing another Troy.' But Mr. Merry never forgot this 'pointed incivility,' though he and his friends knew that by an express regulation at the White House, all etiquette in respect to official precedence was formally abolished, and though with the most stringent etiquette of the Celestial Empire in force, it would seem an amusing specimen of impertinence in him to claim priority over the Secretary of State of the United States.

"But the farce was not ended. Mrs. Merry thenceforth eschewed the Presidential mansion, and if her husband went there it was only officially. After the clamour subsided, the President felt a good-natured desire to put an end to this frivolous matter, and to relieve the offended dignitaries from the awkwardness of their position. Accordingly he made inquiry through a common friend (the representative, we think, of the Swedish Government) whether Mr. and Mrs. Merry would accept an invitation to a family dinner? The former was understood to give an affirmative answer,

and the invitation was sent, written in the President's own hand. The minister replied by addressing the Secretary of State to know whether he was invited in his private or official capacity? If in the one, he must obtain the permission of his sovereign; if in the other, he must receive an assurance in advance that he would be treated as became his position. The Secretary of State put an end to the correspondence in a very dry note, and here the affair ended.

"Mr. Thomas Moore had an individual cause of complaint against the President, the history and consequences of which would be in no way worth repeating, except for a characteristic anecdote they chance to furnish of the latter. Moore was, as he remarks, presented to the President by Mr. Merry. He had then published nothing which had crossed the Atlantic, but

— gentle Little's moral song

To soothe the mania of the amorous throng.
Mr. Jefferson knew not the 'young Catullus of his day,' and had no conception that he stood in the dangerous presence of the hero of Chalk Farm, or of the better-loaded weapons of a clever lampooner. Accordingly, standing stark six feet two inches and a half, and with that cold first look he always cast upon a stranger, the President gazed down on the perfumed little Adonis, spoke to him, and being occupied, gave him no more attention. Moore (then twenty-four) had crossed the Atlantic in the same vessel with Mr. and Mrs. Merry, in October, 1803, and had hardly set foot in the United States before he began to write home his own and Mrs. Merry's disgust at everything in the United States. He repaired to Bermuda, where he spent the winter—made his appearance in Washington in June, 1804; met with undistinguished reception; was flattered by Mrs. Merry's sympathizers, and fell to lampooning the President and everything American, except a few attentive Federal gentlemen and ladies."

It seems that Mr. Moore in his letters home expressed himself as being especially disgusted at the "philosophic humility" of the American President, and his style of living. The President only occupied a "corner" of his mansion. The "grand edifice" was "encircled by a very rude pale, through which a common rustic stile introduced visitors," &c. &c. Nor did he like his politics any better.

As soon as these scurrilous attacks were published, some of the President's indignant young relatives entered his library, while he sat serenely unconscious of calamity, and pointed out to him the obnoxious passages in an exasperated manner, when the President, looking at their troubled faces, broke into a hearty laugh. When Moore's *Melodies* appeared in the United States a copy was placed in his hands. "Why," said he, "this is the little man who satirized me so!" He read on, and as he began to see the merit in the book, he exclaimed, "Why, he is a poet after all."

Jefferson was very fond of society, and during his occupancy of the White House always had a number of visitors partaking of his hospitalities, which he dispensed in the style of the Virginia gentleman of the old *régime*. He was a *bon vivant*, fond of his wine, horses, and genial company; too fond, indeed, for he retired from the Presidency 20,000 dols. in debt. The excess of his expenditures over his income for his first presidential year amounted to nearly 6000 dols.*

Not bad for an equal rights Repub-

lican, who was ever advocating simplicity and economy in the administration of the affairs of the Government. But he wanted the people to follow his precept and not his example. Parsimonious to the last degree in disbursing from the coffers of the State, he opened his own purse with a regal hand.

To all titles of honour, such as "Excellency," "Honourable," and even "Mr.," he was much opposed. Before he himself filled the office, in presenting his respects to the President, it was always "Thomas Jefferson," or "T. J.," not "Mr. Jefferson," who addressed "the President," not to "your Excellency," as then was, and is now customary.

Two days before the expiration of his term, Jefferson wrote to his friend the Duke de Nemours: "Within a few days I retire to my family, my books, and my forms; and having gained the harbour myself, I shall look on my friends still buffeting the storm with anxiety, indeed, but not with envy. Never did a prisoner released from his chains feel such relief as I shall in shaking off the shackles of power."

Daniel Webster, after a visit to Monticello, thus describes the personal appearance of Jefferson: "He is now between eighty-one and eighty-two, above six feet high, of an ample, long frame, rather thin and spare. His head, which is not peculiar in its shape, is set rather forward on his shoulders; and his neck, being long, there is, when he is walking or conversing, an habitual protrusion of it. It is still well covered with hair, which, having been once red, and now turning grey, is of an indistinct sandy colour. His eyes are small, very light, and now neither brilliant nor striking. His chin is rather long, but not pointed. His nose small, regular in its outline, and the nostrils a little elevated. His mouth is well formed, and still filled with teeth; it is strongly compressed, bearing an expression of contentment and benevolence. His complexion, formerly light and freckled, now bears the marks of age and cutaneous affection. His limbs are uncommonly long; his hands and feet very large, and his wrists of an extraordinary size (probably swollen with rheumatism). His walk is not precise and military, but easy and swinging. He stoops a little, not so much from age as from natural formation. When sitting he appears short, partly from a rather lounging habit of sitting, and partly from

* The following statement is taken from his account book:—Expenditures from March 4, 1801, to March 4, 1802.

Secretary	450	dols.
Provisions	4,504.84	"
Fuel	690.88	"
Miscellaneous	295.82	"
Servants	2,675.84	"
Groceries	2,003.71	"
Wines	2,797.28	"
Stable	884.45	"
Dress, Saddlery, &c.	567.36	"
Charities (in cash)	978.20	"
Contingencies	557.81	"
Books and Stationery	391.30	"
Debts paid	3,917.59	"
Loans	170.00	"
Acquisitions (horses, carriages, &c.)	4,712.74	"
Building at Monticello	2,076.29	"
Furniture	545.48	"
Household expenses at Monticello	652.82	"
Plantation at ditto	3,732.23	"
Family aids	1,030.10	"
	33,634.84	"
Cr.		
By Salary	25,000.00	"
" Tobacco	2,974.00	"
" Profits of Nailery	533.33	"
" Debt contracted with A. Barnes	4,361.00	"
	32,868.33	"
Error	766.51	"
	33,634.84	"

the disproportionate length of his limbs. *** Mr. Jefferson rises in the morning as soon as he can see the hands of his clock, which is directly opposite his bed, and examines his thermometer immediately, as he keeps a regular meteorological diary. He employs himself chiefly in writing till breakfast, which is at nine. From that time till dinner he is in his library, excepting that in fair weather he rides on horseback from seven to fourteen miles. Dines at four, returns to the drawing-room at six, when coffee is brought in, and passes the evening till nine in conversation. His habit of retiring at that hour is so strong that it has become essential to his health and comfort. His diet is simple, but he seems restrained only by his taste. His breakfast is tea and coffee, bread always fresh from the oven, of which he does not seem afraid, with sometimes a slight accompaniment of cold meat. He enjoys his dinner well, taking with his meat a large proportion of vegetables. He has a strong preference for the wines of the Continent, of which he has many sorts of excellent quality, having been more than commonly successful in his mode of importing and preserving them. Among others we found the following, which are very rare in this country, and apparently not at all injured by transportation: L'Ednau, Muscat, Samian, and Blanchette de Limoux. Dinner is served in half-Virginian, half-French style, in good taste and abundance. No wine is put on the table till the cloth is removed. In conversation Mr. Jefferson is easy and natural, and apparently not ambitious; it is not loud, as challenging general attention, but usually addressed to the person next him."

The deaths of Jefferson and of John Adams were almost coincident, on the fourth of July—the latter lingering for an hour or so after the demise of the former.

James Madison, the especial pet of Jefferson, doubtless partly owing to the influence exerted by the latter in his favour, succeeded to the presidential chair. He was a *protégé* of the great democrat who modelled him after his own fashion, and found in him a willing and obedient pupil who never seemed to question the teachings of his preceptor. Jefferson was his Pythagoras whose *dixit* was sufficient and satisfactory. Yet he was by no means a mediocrity, but his talents did not appear to advantage in

comparison with the genius of his mentor. He, indeed, made a very respectable figure in the presidential chair, after Jefferson had gone to Monticello, and was no longer beside him for people to make disparaging comparisons. When Jefferson disappeared from active life, and the brilliant Hamilton, and the old war-horse John Adams also, retired from the political scene, Mr. Madison found himself apparently among his compeers at Washington.

The bond of union between Jefferson and Madison was in part owing, perhaps, to the difference in personal characteristics. Jefferson was six feet two and a half inches in height; Madison five feet and six or seven inches. In walking Jefferson had a bold swinging gait, while Madison picked his steps carefully. Jefferson was a man of mark wherever seen, but Madison's appearance attracted no more attention than that bestowed on an ordinary passer-by.

One of his eulogists says of Madison, "he had the old school elegance, and superabounded with information. His discourse, without being didactic and frigid, was weighty. He, perhaps, was never impassioned, and was rather taciturn in public. But among his friends he was a delightful and humorous talker; and in very small and very confidential circles, blazed out into unrestrained facetiousness, and occasional brilliant flashes of wit. He told a story admirably, and had a long list of pet anecdotes against Jefferson, at which their victim always laughed until his eyes ran over. Mr. Madison's fund of geniality and liveliness was inexhaustible, and it defied age or pain. A gentleman who was intimate at Montpellier, long after its owner's retirement, mentioned to us visiting him on one occasion, when he was severely indisposed and confined to his bed. When the family and guests sat down to dinner, the invalid desired the door of his apartment to be left open, 'so that he could hear what was going on.' Every few moments he was heard to cry out in a feeble but most humorous voice, 'Doctor, are you pushing about the bottles?—do your duty, doctor, or I must cashier you.'"

But the central figure during the Madison administration, was the beautiful and accomplished Mrs. Madison, who drew around her the *cognoscenti* of art and fashion in those days. The President himself seems to have been but a back-

ground figure in the presidential mansion, during the reign of his queenly wife. She survived her husband many years, and took up her residence permanently at Washington, in the house at present occupied by Admiral Wilkes in Lafayette-square, where she continued to exercise the same influence in society as when she was mistress of the White House. In earlier years she was known as the captivating Dolly Payne, then as Mrs. Todd the young widow, who, tradition says, after much wooing, was induced to change her name to Madison.

Mr. James Monroe, the last of the Virginia presidents, with the exception of "Accidental" Tyler, was the next occupant. He was the author or initiator of the famous "Monroe doctrine" which was promulgated in one of his messages, an epitome of which as it is generally understood is, neither to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe, nor to allow the nations of the old world to interfere in the affairs of the new. Mr. Monroe evinced creditable pluck, when in the same message he declared, in pursuance of the doctrine to foreign nations, "that any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere," would be regarded by the United States as "dangerous to our peace and safety."

The greatest service, perhaps, which Mr. Monroe ever rendered to his country, was the purchase, through his instrumentality, of the State of Louisiana, Bonaparte fortunately being at that time pressed for funds to pay his soldiers. Monroe acted on the occasion as confidential agent of Jefferson with plenipotentiary powers. The successful accomplishment of his mission was considered quite creditable to his skill as a diplomatist. The amount paid for the state was but 15,000,000 dollars, a sum which is being now expended every six or seven days in conducting the war against the rebels. Jefferson said of his purity of character, "that if his soul were turned inside out, not a spot would be found on it." He was generous to a fault, and also had not only dependant relations about him, but needy hangers-on who called themselves his friends, and fed upon his bounty, and impoverished him, in spite of his comfortable salary, to such an extent, that in his old age he was obliged to live with a son-in-law for the remainder of his days. Madison thought "that the country had never fully appre-

ciated the robust understanding of Monroe, and the fact may be partially accounted for by his deficiency in the power of public speaking—a showy talent which in America so largely influences the popular judgment in regard to intellectual endowments. In person James Monroe was tall and well formed, with a light complexion and blue eyes. The expression of his countenance was an accurate index of the simplicity, benevolence, and integrity of his character. He was plain in his manners and tastes, fond of the society of his friends, strongly given to hospitality, and a very fair specimen of the kindly old race of Virginia country gentlemen." His wife was a Miss Kortright, who was somewhat celebrated for her beauty and accomplishments, and who as Mrs. Monroe led a quiet exemplary life in the White House.

After a sharp contest between John Quincy Adams and General Andrew Jackson in the House of Representatives, the former was elected as the successor of Monroe, but did not take possession of the Executive Mansion for two or three months after the commencement of his term, owing to the delay of the ex-president in moving out. On the evening of the day on which it was made known that Adams was elected over Jackson, the two rivals met at one of the levées of the White House. Jackson accepting his defeat with a good grace, but feeling it keenly enough, addressed the successful man in his hearty south-western manner, with some casual remark in reference to the election, to which the elect, unthawable, replied coldly and unbendingly. This was characteristic of the younger Adams—no humour, no *bonhomie*—life was too serious a business for the indulgence of such trifling. He was an economical and judicious housekeeper, whose hospitality was extended with republican simplicity. From the abstemious life which he led, and a naturally strong constitution, he was doubtless indebted for that green old age in which he was still a foeman worthy of the steel of other leaders in the prime of life.

During his occupancy of the mansion, his son had a billiard-table put up in the east room, at that time still comparatively empty, a proceeding which created no little noise among the *quidnuncs* of the opposition, who tried hard to build upon it a case of extravagance and ungodliness, but not with much success.

The administration of John Quincy

Adams does not seem to have been a popular one. General Jackson, with increasing popularity, led the opposition in accusations against Adams of bargain and corruptions, and combinations were entered into and became so formidable that he was unseated at the expiration of his first term, and retired to Quincy, his home in Massachusetts. "After having successfully kept the political seas for nearly forty years, and that in very stormy times, Mr. Adams was at last stranded, as it seemed, high and dry on a lee-shore." Though he had then reached an age when most men think of giving up the cares and troubles of active life, "he had in his temperament too much of innate vigour and indefatigable activity, and too much of the stormy petrel in his character, to make him willing to leave that vocation to which both by nature and habit he was so especially adapted." The ex-president entered Congress, and served for many years, where he was famous as the champion of the rights of the people, and where he showed himself as fearless as he was incorruptible. The termination of his brilliant career was an apt illustration of his saying, which he has been heard to repeat on several occasions, that "it was better to wear out than rust out," for he dropped from his seat in the House one day, struck with paralysis, and in three days after died with these words on his lips, "This is the last of earth; I am content." He died as he wished to die, "the still admired and trusted champion, with harness on his back and spear in hand."

After Jackson's inauguration great crowds followed the conquering hero from the Capitol back to the White House. Judge Story, a man of old-timed notions, was present at the scene, of which he wrote:—"After the ceremony was over, the President went to the palace to receive company, and there he was visited by immense crowds of all sorts of people, from the highest and most polished, down to the most vulgar and gross in the nation. I never saw such a mixture. The reign of King Mob seemed triumphant. I was glad to escape from the scene as soon as possible." A letter -writer said:—"A profusion of refreshments had been provided. Orange-punch by barrelsful was made; but as the waiters opened the door to bring it out a rush would be made, the glasses broken, the pails of liquor upset, and the most painful confusion prevailed. To such a painful

degree was this carried, that wine and ice-creams could not be brought out to the ladies, and tubs of punch were taken from the lower story into the garden, to lead off the crowd from the rooms. On such an occasion it was certainly difficult to keep anything like order, but it was mortifying to see men, with boots heavy with mud, standing on the damask satin-covered chairs, from their eagerness to get a sight of the President."

The domestic peace of the General was very much disturbed during his occupancy of the White House by the Mrs. Eaton imbroglio, which assumed such a serious turn as to divide the Cabinet. Parton in his "Life of Jackson" gives the following account of the affair:—

"No sooner had General Jackson announced the names of the gentlemen who were to compose his Cabinet, than an opposition to one of them manifested itself of a peculiar and most virulent character. Mr. Eaton, the President's friend and neighbour, was the object of this opposition, the grounds of which must be particularly stated, for it led to important results.

"A certain William O'Neal kept at Washington for many years a large old-fashioned tavern, where members of Congress, in considerable numbers, boarded during the sessions of the national legislature. William O'Neal had a daughter, sprightly and beautiful, who aided him and his wife in entertaining the boarders. It was not good for a girl to grow up in a large tavern. Peg O'Neal, as she was called, was so lively in her deportment, so free in her conversation, that had she been born twenty years later, she would have been called one of the 'fast' girls of Washington. A witty, pretty, saucy, active, tavern-keeper's daughter, who makes free with the inmates of her father's house, and is made free with by them, may escape contamination but not calumny.

"When Major Eaton first came to Washington as a senator of the United States, in the year 1818, he took board at Mr. O'Neal's tavern, and continued to reside there every winter for ten years. He became acquainted, of course, with the family, including the vivacious and attractive Peg. When General Jackson came to the city as senator in 1823, he also went to live with the O'Neals, whom he had known in Washington before it had become the seat of government. For Mrs. O'Neal, who was a remarkably

efficient woman, he had a particular respect. Even during his presidency, when he was supposed to visit no one, it was one of his favourite relaxations, when worn out with business, to stroll with Major Lewis across the 'old fields' near Washington to the cottage where Mrs. O'Neal lived in retirement, and enjoy an hour's chat with the old lady. Mrs. Jackson also, during her residence in Washington in 1825, became attached to the good Mrs. O'Neal and to her daughter.

"In the course of time Miss O'Neal became the wife of Purser Timberlake of the United States Navy, and the mother of two children. In 1828 came the news that Mr. Timberlake, then on duty in the Mediterranean, had cut his throat in a fit of melancholy, induced, it was said, by previous intoxication. On hearing this intelligence, Major Eaton, then a widower, felt an inclination to marry Mrs. Timberlake, for whom he had entertained an attachment quite as tender as a man could lawfully indulge for the wife of a friend and brother-mason. He took the precaution to consult General Jackson on the subject. 'Why, yes, major,' said the general, 'if you love the woman, and she will have you, marry her by all means.' Major Eaton mentioned what the General well knew, that Mrs. Timberlake's reputation in Washington had not escaped reproach, and that Major Eaton himself was supposed to have been too intimate with her. 'Well,' said the General, 'your marrying her will disprove these charges and restore Peg's good name.' And so perhaps it might if Major Eaton had not been taken into the Cabinet.

"Eaton and Mrs. Timberlake were married in January, 1829, a few weeks before General Jackson arrived at the seat of government. As soon as it was whispered about Washington that Major Eaton was to be a member of the new Cabinet, it occurred with great force to the minds of certain ladies, who supposed themselves to be at the head of society at the capital, that, in that case, Peg O'Neal would be the wife of a Cabinet minister, and, as such, entitled to admission into their own sacred circle. Horrible to contemplate! Forbid it, morality!—forbid it, decency!—forbid it, General Jackson!"

Parton goes on to state that the General became warmly interested in Mrs. Eaton's case—wrote to New York for testimony to sustain her good character, and kept up

a vehement correspondence with a Philadelphia clergyman and others, who were understood to have made charges against the lady—undertook her defence in the White House—that, in short, he identified himself personally in the matter, and that the correspondence of the General on this subject would have made about eighty or ninety pages of a good-sized volume. He continues—

"Will it be believed, that at length the President of the United States brought this matter before his Cabinet? The members of the Cabinet having one day assembled in the usual place, Dr. Ely and Mr. Campbell (two of those who were supposed to have spoken or written disparagingly of Mrs. Eaton) were brought before them, when the President endeavoured to demonstrate that Mrs. Eaton was 'as chaste as snow.' Whether the efforts of the President had or had not the effect of convincing the ladies of Washington that Mrs. Eaton was worthy of admission into their circle, we shall see. Upon a point of that nature, ladies are not easily convinced. Meanwhile, the suitors for presidential favour are advised to make themselves visible at the ladies' receptions. A card in Mrs. Eaton's card-basket is not unlikely to be a winning card.

"General Jackson succeeded in showing that the charges against Mrs. Eaton were not supported by testimony, but he did not succeed in convincing the ladies who led the society of Washington that Mrs. Eaton was a proper person to be admitted into their circle. They would not receive her. Mrs. Calhoun would not, although she had called upon the lady soon after her marriage, in company with the Vice-President, her husband. Mrs. Berrien would not, although Mr. Berrien, ignorant, as he afterwards said, of the lady's standing at the capital, had been one of the guests at her wedding. Mrs. Branch would not, although Mr. Branch had been taken into the Cabinet upon Major Eaton's suggestion. Mrs. Ingham would not, although the false gossip of the hour had not wholly spared her own fair fame. The wives of the foreign ministers would not. Mrs. Donelson, the mistress of the White House, though compelled to receive her, would not visit her. 'Anything else, uncle,' said she, 'I will do for you, but I cannot call upon Mrs. Eaton.' The general's reply in effect was this: 'Then go back to Tennessee, my dear.' And

she went to Tennessee. Her husband, who was also of the anti-Eaton party, threw up his post of private secretary, and went with her; and Mr. Nicholas P. Trist, of the State Department, was appointed private secretary in his stead. Six months after, however, by the interposition of friends, Major Donelson and his wife were induced to return and assume their former positions in the mansion of the President."

The new Secretary of State, Van Buren, at length arrived in the city, and came to the rescue of the bothered general.

"Mr. Van Buren was a widower. He had no daughters. Apprised of the state of things in Washington, he did what was proper, natural, and right. He called upon Mrs. Eaton, received Mrs. Eaton, made parties for Mrs. Eaton; and on all occasions treated Mrs. Eaton with the marked respect with which a gentleman always treats a lady whom he believes to have been the victim of unjust aspersion. A man does not get much credit for an act of virtue which is, also, of all the acts possible in his circumstances, the most politic. Many men have the weakness to refrain from doing right, because their doing so will be seen to signally promote their cherished objects. We have nothing to do with Mr. Van Buren's motives. I believe them to have been honest. I believe that he faithfully endeavoured to perform the office of oil upon the troubled waters. The course he adopted was the right course, whatever may have been its motive.

The letter writers of that day were in the habit of amusing their readers with the gossip of the capital, as letter writers are now. But not a whisper of these scandals escaped into print until society had been rent by them into hostile "sets" for more than two years. After the explosion, one of the Washington correspondents gave an exaggerated and prejudicial, but not wholly incorrect, account of certain scenes in which "Bellona" (the nickname of Mrs. Eaton) and the Secretary of State had figured. It was among the diplomatic corps, with whom Mr. Van Buren had an official as well as personal intimacy, that he strove to make converts to the Eaton cause. It chanced that Mr. Vaughan, the British minister, and Baron Krudener, the Russian minister, were both bachelors, and both entered good-naturedly into the plans of the Secretary of State.

"A ball and supper," says the writer just referred to, "were got up by his excellency, the British minister, Mr. Vaughan, a particular friend of Mr. Van Buren. After various stratagems to keep Bellona afloat during the evening, in which almost every cotillon in which she made her appearance was instantly dissolved into its original elements, she was at length conducted by the British minister to the head of the table, where, in pursuance of that instinctive power of inattention to whatever it seems improper to notice, the ladies seemed not to know that she was at the table. This ball and supper were followed by another given by the Russian minister (another old bachelor). To guard against the repetition of the mortification in the spontaneous dissolution of the cotillon, and the neglect of the ladies at supper (where, you must observe, none but ladies sat down), Mr. Van Buren made a direct and earnest appeal to the lady of the minister of Holland, Mrs. Huygens, whom he entreated in her own language to consent to be introduced to the 'accomplished and lovely Mrs. Eaton.'

"The ball scene arrived, and Mrs. Huygens with uncommon dignity maintained her ground, avoiding the advances of Bellona and her associates, until supper was announced, when Mrs. Huygens was informed by Baron Krudener that Mr. Eaton would conduct her to the table. She declined and remonstrated, but in the meantime Mr. Eaton advanced to offer his arm. She at first objected, but to relieve him from his embarrassment, walked with him to the table, where she found Mrs. Eaton seated at the head, beside an empty chair for herself. Mrs. Huygens had no alternative but to become an instrument of the intrigue, or decline taking supper; she chose the latter, and taking hold of her husband's arm, withdrew from the room. This was the offence for which General Jackson afterward threatened to send her husband home.

"The next scene in the drama was a grand dinner, given in the east room of the palace, where it was arranged that Mr. Vaughan was to conduct Mrs. Eaton to the table, and place her at the side of the President, who took care by his marked attentions to admonish all present (about eighty, including the principal officers of the government and their ladies) that Mrs. Eaton was one of his favourites, and that he expected her to be treated as such in all places. Dinner

being over, the company retired to the coffee-room, to indulge in the exhilarating conversation which wine and good company usually excite. But all would not do—nothing could move the inflexible ladies."

The writer already referred to concludes—

"How exquisitely gratifying to General Jackson Mr. Van Buren's emphatic public recognition of Mrs. Eaton must have been every reader will perceive. General Jackson had thrown his whole soul into her cause, as has been shown. But it was not General Jackson alone whom Mr. Van Buren's conduct penetrated with delight and gratitude. It completely won the four persons who enjoyed more of General Jackson's confidence and esteem than any others in Washington. First, Major Eaton, the President's old friend and most confidential Cabinet adviser. Secondly, Mrs. Eaton. Thirdly, Mrs. O'Neal, the mother of Mrs. Eaton, the friend of the President and of his lamented wife. Lastly, but not least in importance, Major William B. Lewis, an inmate of the White House, the President's most intimate and most constant companion, and formerly the brother-in-law of Major Eaton. The preference and friendship of these four persons included the preference and support of Amos Kendall, Isaac Hill, Dr. Randolph, and all the peculiar adherents of General Jackson."

After serving two terms, Old Hickory, as he was frequently called, retired from the presidency the idol of his party. Now his memory is held in grateful remembrance by all parties, for the political issues of the past seem as the merest trifles compared with the great question of the present—Union or Secession. During the last days of the old chieftain at the White House, he was the recipient of many favours from the people, among the rest an enormous cheese, brought to him with banners and band of music procession. The cheese was four feet in diameter, two feet thick, and weighed fourteen hundred pounds, which was twice as large as the cheese presented to Jefferson on a similar occasion. The general distributed pieces of his cheese among the guests at one of his levees, which the old *habitues* of the mansion say caused such an odour about the premises that it was perceptible for months after.

The old hero was seventy years old at

the expiration of his last presidential term, when he retired to the Hermitage—his home in Tennessee.

Martin Van Buren, the favourite of Jackson, succeeded him in the mansion. It is said that Van Buren was the only statesman who could *manage* the old man in his obstinate moods. It was the habit of the General, in preparing his messages, to write off on stray scraps of paper from time to time the ideas which struck him, and deposit them in the old white hat. It was made the business of Mr. Van Buren to put the contents into a presentable shape for Congress, to blunt the General's bristling ideas a little that they might not prick too sharply. This delicate task he usually accomplished to the General's satisfaction, although tradition says, in one or two instances, he insisted on having his notions inserted in all their naked crudity in spite of the gentle remonstrances of the kinderhook gentleman.

The furnishing of the east room of the mansion was completed during Van Buren's Presidency, which caused a great hue and cry about extravagance, squandering of public money, and all that sort of humbug among his political opponents, one of whom made himself particularly conspicuous in this way—the Honourable Jack Ogleas he was called, of Pennsylvania. Ogle raised his eyes with holy horror at the sinful luxuries indulged in by Van Buren, or, as he called him, his Highness Martin the First. This was the key-note of a number of electioneering speeches which he made through his own State. It seemed like a very weak invention of the enemy, but it proved a very effectual one in the canvass, for the great unwashed swallowed it at a gulp. It is perhaps not asserting too much to say that Van Buren lost Pennsylvania when he was a candidate the second time by this electioneering trick.

William Henry Harrison, the clerk of a county court somewhere in Ohio, was drawn from his obscurity and nominated for the Presidency on the score of availability. He was a weak man, but the Tippecanoe scrimmage did his business for him effectually, and he was elected the executor of Van Buren. This was in the days of "log cabins," "hard cider," "Tippecanoe and Tyler too," and "Matty Van is a used-up man," together with mass meetings and political processions. Harrison died one month after

his inauguration, killed by his political adherents in pestering him for office and shaking hands with him. His was the first funeral from the White House. The Portuguese hymn on this sad occasion was played upon trumpets with peculiarly solemn effect as the coffin was brought out to be placed upon the funeral car.

John Tyler, the last of the Virginians and the tenth President, came after Harrison. He is frequently styled the "accidental President," and was nominated for the vice-Presidency when he never would have been thought of for the high position to which he was unexpectedly elevated afterwards. The large-nosed President was a man of fair ability, but a renegade—a trimmer, who eventually was despised by both Whigs and Democrats. After a long political interment he burst his cerements and reappeared in Washington in 1861 as a member of the Peace Convention, composed of delegates from border States, which met in the capital for the purpose of arranging terms of compromise between the rebels and the Government, and of which he was President; in this capacity, true to his old instincts, he endeavoured to play the go-between. For a time it was difficult to tell on which side the big-nosed man had ranged himself. At the eleventh hour, however, he wheeled into secession line. Mrs. Tyler died while her husband occupied the White House. Within a short time back the wretched old ex-President also died with treason on his lips.

James K. Polk, who used to be called by his friends Young Hickory, was the next occupant. The full-length portrait of him, which hangs in the rotunda of the Capitol, is considered a very good likeness. He was an unostentatious, grave-looking man; an English traveller described him as resembling a Dissenting minister. Mrs. Polk was a lady of some accomplishments, and performed her duties as mistress of the White House quite creditably.

General Taylor, although he disposed of the Mexicans without much trouble, found the office-seekers too much for him when he came to the capital. He was hand-shaked, and badgered, and waylaid on all occasions to the last degree. The old chieftain, like Harrison, could not stand the constant wear and tear of body and soul, and six months after his inauguration he died. His march from the West to the capital of the nation was a triumphant one. He was met at every turn and village through which he passed

by the enthusiastic people with cheers and outstretched digits. Such was the old man's popularity that, during this trip, his war-horse, Old Whitey, lost a goodly portion of his caudal appendage, through the general desire for mementos.

Millard Fillmore, a man of the people, who had struggled up through indigence and toil from early boyhood, became President in consequence of General Taylor's death. His administration was a peaceful, prosperous one, characterized by unusual ability. Daniel Webster was the Secretary of State, and wrote, while holding this position, his celebrated letter to the Chevalier Hulsemann. Many think if Fillmore had not signed the Fugitive Slave Bill he might have been President for another term. He seemed to entertain hopes himself of a re-election, but he was not considered sufficiently up with the age in the new issues which were already beginning to arise to entitle him to an extension of his term. He received the electoral vote of but one State—Maryland.

During the latter part of his Presidency he met with a bereavement in the loss of Mrs. Fillmore, whose early advantages had been superior to his own, and who, through all his rising fortunes, had been to him an invaluable counsellor. A few months afterwards he also lost an accomplished daughter, who is remembered by the old Washingtons as an exemplary and agreeable young lady.

Franklin Pierce, a compromise candidate of the democratic party, became the fourteenth President. On the question of slavery he always sided with the South, and in his first message to Congress he hoped that "no sectional or ambitious or fanatical excitement might again threaten the durability of our institutions, or obscure the light of our prosperity." He signed the bill for the repeal of the Missouri compromise and introduction of slavery into the new territories of Kansas and Nebraska. This act aroused the indignation of many people in the North, who considered the repeal of the old compromise a breach of faith. The last two years of Pierce's administration were marked by discord and discontent, on account of the Kansas and Nebraska troubles principally. Jefferson Davis had a seat in his Cabinet as Secretary of War.

Mr. Pierce, in April, 1861, made a speech in Massachusetts, in which he

fully endorsed the efforts of the government in putting down the rebellion. The ex-President is a man of fine presence and gentlemanly bearing.

James Buchanan, or the "old public functionary," at last attained the seat he had so long coveted. His sins and shortcomings are still fresh in the public mind. In his career he has shown himself to be a cold, dispassionate man who never acted on impulse, hence never committed any overt act against the conventionalities of society, such as getting drunk, swearing, &c. Thus his virtues were of a negative kind, and his sins rather of omission than commission. Everything was smooth and proper "in his walk and conversation." He was cleanly—finically so—in his dress, always appearing with a newly-shaved face and immaculate linen, and the well-remembered spotless choker. His suspicious nature was in a measure screened by a forced *bonhomie*. All his letters he opened himself; though a great task, so little confidence had he in his friends, that he would allow no one to do it for him or to assist him. Moments of expansion he never had, even with his most intimate friends. There was no getting down from the stilts of formality on which he was continually perched. One would have supposed that during his hours of relaxation, some term of endearment would have been bestowed on the charming niece who occupied the mansion with him, but those who have been on terms of intimacy with them say nothing of the kind escaped him; it was always "Miss Harriet."

As much as the uncle fell short of the duties of his position, the niece excelled in hers. Not since the days of Mrs. Madison was the White House graced with such an accomplished, well-bred mistress as Miss Lane.

The present occupant of the White House, Mr. Lincoln, has risen from the rank-and-file of the people of humble life to his present proud position. A self-made man, who, commencing at the foot of the ladder, has mounted to the top-most round. No former President has risen from as humble a sphere, nor overcome such obstacles, as Mr. Lincoln. His life is a brilliant record which furnishes additional evidence, if any were needed, that the highest office in the gift of the people is accessible to the humblest in the land.

* * * *

During the last winter (1863), the night levees, with the exception of the one held on the day before the adjournment of Congress, were abolished, and the Saturday receptions, from one to three o'clock, substituted therefore. On one of these days the Dobbs party visited the White House to pay their respects to Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln. They passed through the large hall and corridor into the blue room, of which the prevailing colours are blue and gilt. In this room, between the two windows, is a bust of Mr. Lincoln, taken when his whiskers were shaved off half way down his cheek, leaving two hard lines crossing his cheek at angles, and which look worse in art than nature. It is difficult to judge of the likeness, owing to the gloomy light in which the bust is placed. All the rooms devoted to the public on reception days, with the exception of the east room, seem to be imperfectly lighted. In the blue room, a full-length portrait of Washington hangs over the grand piano—either a very good copy or an original of Gilbert Stuart probably. Mrs. Madison, when the British captured the capital, cut this picture out of its frame and took it with her in her flight, and on the return of the Madisons it was replaced. There are flowers tastefully arranged in this room, which is altogether the most inviting of the suite. The red, green, and east rooms contain no object of art, except so far as it exists in gorgeous furniture, curtains, carpets, and painted walls.

The Dobbstown party, with Cronier and Clavers, passed from the blue room into the adjoining apartment, the red room, where Mr. Lincoln and his wife stood in the centre to receive their guests, who were presented by a portly, rather elderly gentleman, who demanded the name of each comer as soon as he or she crossed the threshold and presented them, first, to the President, and then to Mrs. Lincoln. If the visitor were unaccompanied by ladies, this ceremony was more honoured in the breach than in the observance—a how do you do and a shake of the hand being the general custom, when the guest moved on, to make room for others, into the next apartment *en suite*—the green room.

On this occasion, Mr. John Dobbs, according to previous instructions, headed the party, and was first presented, with Mrs. Dobbs, to the President and Mrs. Lincoln. By way of saying something,

doubtless, the Chief Magistrate made an allusion to Dobbs' speech in Congress.

"Did you read it?" said Dobbs, looking quite placidly over his spectacles at Mr. Lincoln, who, taking the member from Dobbstown for one of the humorous ilk, responded, laughingly, with one of those ready answers for which he is famous. In putting the question, Dobbs' face wore a serious expression, but the President's humour being contagious, parenthesis lines began to form on each side of the worthy gentleman's mouth, and he kept the President company, for his genial nature required but little encouragement to bring it out. With this mood upon him, he was about to proceed to further conversation with the chief of the nation, but his wife opportunely pressing his arm, the parenthesis lines disappeared altogether, the eyes resumed their intelligent expression, and the mouth was firmly closed. Long training had taught him to obey quickly. As he was leaving the presence, the President addressed a question of some kind to him, to which the imperturbable old gentleman replied—

"I'll tell you to-morrow, or some other time, sir;" and bowing grandly, passed on with his wife to Mrs. Lincoln, who stood to the right of her husband. Here a few feminine remarks occurred between the two ladies, and the Dobbs couple passed into the green-room, where Mr. Dobbs took occasion to remark, *sotto voce*, to Mrs. Dobbs—

"Sometimes, when I'm saying things in real earnest people think I'm funny. Queer, isn't it?"

Whereupon the lady answered, that as soon as she should have an opportunity she would make his remark a text for a private and instructive lecture, by which she hoped he would profit.

The husband said nothing, but looked resigned.

Cronier and Miss Mary Dobbs were next presented. The former observed, after the ceremony—

"The idea is come to me that Mrs. Lincoln looks very well."

The count was as fond of airing his English as Miss Mary was her French. Thus, from their preferences, the conversation between them frequently went on in two languages, with the understanding that they should correct each other when occasion required.

"Oui," remarked the young lady,

"cette robe lui va joliment bien, mais, que diable."

"As you say in the expressive language of yours," interrupted the count, "it is not the cheese for the young lady to say, 'que diable.'"

"Qu'est ce qu'il faut dire, alors, en pareil cas?"

"Whatever it shall please you but that."

"Eh bien, allons sans le diable," resumed Mary. "J'ai voulu vous dire tout simplement, que Madame Lincoln s'est bien habillée, selon mon goût, malgré ce que disent les gobe-mouches. Mais le mari—voilà un homme endimanché."

"I shall not make to myself the pleasure to ask him the address of his tailor," added the count, who tried sometimes to say waggish things in English, but generally with indifferent success.

Next came Alice with Clavers and Ruggles, when the inevitable hand-shaking was again performed with the head of the nation, who starts forward quickly a step or two in taking the hand of the guest, gives it two shakes, and drops it as if it were something hot. This is accompanied with an inclination of the body and the conventional "how do you do" of the White House, varied now and then according to the remarks occasionally addressed to him. The greetings of the guests are generally of the same character—frequently flattering, as many of the people who throng around him have favours to ask, and therefore take every means to ingratiate themselves. Others, again, frank, loyal natures, speak very plainly in the presidential presence of the presidential duties. Mr. Lincoln seems to take it all in good part, for his patience and humour are inexhaustible.

As the trio stood in the corner of the room regarding the scene before them, Ruggles said—

"Mr. Lincoln commenced by trying to please both friends and opponents, and he was for a long time, saving his presence, like the horse between two bundles of hay, not knowing which to choose. As the breach in the Republican party widened, each fraction tugged the harder to induce him to follow their respective policies. Of course the struggle has been hard and protracted, and still goes on, but those known as radical Republicans—Phillips, Greeley, Beecher, and that ilk, seem to have had the best of it; and strange to say, although the President has yielded to their wishes in a great

measure, not, perhaps, from a sense of the justice of their demands, but to the great pressure, these people are more dissatisfied with his course than those to whom he has yielded nothing. Mr. Lincoln, unfortunately, has referred so frequently to great pressures being brought to bear upon him, that the people are beginning to believe that he is too impressible. It is the great misfortune of the President to split differences between opposing parties if it can possibly be done. For instance, if one set of men want one thing, and another wish something else, the President will endeavour to persuade them each to lop off something, will see them separately, and try to whittle the affair down to a point on which they can both agree; thus apparently losing sight of the question of right, which of course should govern, above all, the action of a chief magistrate. That wing of the party for which Greely wields the pen and Fremont the sword reached the culminating point in its opposition to the other wing when it conspired, and that is the proper word to eject Mr. Seward from the cabinet; failing in that dark-lantern business, its influence since in the executive mansion is believed by many to have decreased. Mr. Seward behaved in that disagreeable affair with that sense and spirit which usually characterize his course. At the first intimation of what was going on he sent in his resignation, which the President afterwards begged him to withdraw, to the disgust of the Guy Fawkes gentlemen. This was claimed as a triumph for the constitution men, but the President subsequently made concessions to his first love,—hence it is difficult to tell exactly where he stands. My opinion is, that a union—constitution-loving sentiment—is gaining ground every day, which is destined to be the dominant one of the country, and which has been nursed by, and is now gathering strength under such leaders as Seward, Bates, Senators Cowan, Harris, Collamer, Fessenden, Wright, and Governors Morgan and Curtin, and others. The party of which these men are in the foremost rank is destined to be the great popular union party, which will sweep away all one-idea combinations."

"What a partisan you are," answered Alice. "It is well seen to which wing of the old party you belong. And how prone you are to finding fault with the President. I venture to say there is no one could bell the cat better than he

does, under the circumstances. In such times as these, if the nation were to take Presidents on trial, as she does military chieftains, every few days there would be a new President, as there are now military heroes, who come and go like the apparition-descendants of Banquo—heroes who strut their short hour before the public, and then—all is quiet along the Rappahannock. No; people seem to forget the difficulties which hedge the position of President now. To be President from the days of Washington down, was mere child's play, compared with the duties of that officer at this hour. To manage the affairs of such a great nation, with a newly organized army in the field, a navy under construction—annoyed with a disturbed foreign policy, a determined enemy in front, and something very like one behind, badgered by office-seekers and officious advisers, pestered by one-idea people and attacked by partisans, to manage, under such circumstances, without committing mistakes, would be to do something superhuman, for certainly no mere man could do it. Let us not forget that he is flesh and blood the same as ourselves, and instead of increasing his difficulties by scolding him for making mistakes that would occur under any rule, let us aid him as far as we can, by sympathy and unswerving loyalty not only to the government, but to the man."

Ruggles was about to reply somewhat after the style in which he harangued the voters, for when he heard political opinions advanced in opposition to his own, he was as spry as a war-horse at the sound of the trumpet, but the young lady prevented him, saying—

"Pray, don't say anything more on the subject at present, Mr. Ruggles. Reserve yourself for the next fourth of July in Dobbstown, where you can fire yourself in a pyrotechnic display of tropes and figures befitting the occasion. I trust what you were going to say will keep until that time, and that the present repression of your ideas will be attended with no disastrous result to you personally."

Ruggles was very loth to let the occasion pass thus, but was at length obliged to submit to the persistent young lady, who took a pleasure in arousing the bristly-headed gentleman, and then begging the question, as he called it, by not listening to him.

"Mr. Lincoln," said Clavers, "though noted for his humour, is, after all, a me-

lancholy man. His face, in repose, is pensive, and the eyes are remarkable for their tenderness. His merry anecdotes are safety-valves by which the accumulating sadness of his mind is relieved. If this gathering bile of *ennui* were not thrown off in this way, he would likely resort to opium-eating or some other stimulant, which just such constituted natures as his are prone to, in their efforts to remove the oppression weighing so heavily upon the spirit. It is the old story of Tom Hood, and of the French comedian, over again, who possessed the power of amusing others but could not amuse themselves. These makers of puns and jokes are sympathetic people. Was there ever such a spirit-wail as that which reached the world through the 'Bridge of Sighs'? There we find the true Hood—the other is disguised with the gay costume and mask of a merry-andrew. We catch a glimpse of the President's real nature, in his touching appeal to the people of the border States, before issuing the emancipation proclamation. It is superficial to call him an easy-going, happy fellow, as many do, judging him by his surface humour.

Having thus freely discussed the character of him on whom all eyes are now turned, they passed on into the east room, where they rejoined the other members of the party. As Alice, Mary, and Cronier formed a group apart for a moment, the first-named asked—

"And what do *you* think of the President, Count?"

"I cannot think at all of him, when I am in the presence of two charming ladies like *you*," said the gallant foreigner, bowing.

"Very prettily turned. You are making rapid progress in your English, Count," said Alice.

* * * *

When the ladies had returned to the hotel, the younger sister exclaimed to the elder—

"What delightful people the French are!"

"Ah! I see the Count's compliments are beginning to tell on the little innocent," remarked the elder.

"My dear," said Alice, who at times took upon herself the office of mentor to her sister, "you must pay no attention to this kind of chaff in which the Count indulges. It is a part of his education to say these things to every lady he meets. The best way is to reciprocate these com-

plimentary favours. When he tells you your teeth are like pearls, or your lips like coral, or some other banal thing, which gentlemen like the Count are addicted to, you, in return, should dilate on his remarkable qualities of mind and person, for men, after all, swallow a gilded bait like this quicker than women."

CHAPTER IX.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE—SIGHT-SEEING —CONFESSION OF RUGGLES.

THE Misses Dobbs, accompanied by Clavers and Ruggles, drove up the Mall toward the Smithsonian Institute, on one of those bright winter days peculiar to Washington, to take a hasty look at that building and its contents.

The ground on which the building stands occupies a portion of the government land known as the Mall. The enclosure belonging to the Institute comprises fifty-two acres, tastefully laid out in walks and drives, and ornamented with trees and shrubbery by the lamented and distinguished landscape-gardener, Andrew Jackson Downing, to whose memory a vase of fine Italian marble has been erected on the Smithsonian grounds—the scene of his last labours. The vase is of an antique pattern, the body ornamented with rich arabesque, and the lower part surrounded with acanthus-leaves, and the handles resting on satyr heads. A carved base supports a pedestal of carved cornice and four sides, each containing a panel with appropriate inscription.

The building has been subjected to much criticism as regards its style, some affirming that it is neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. An English writer calls it bastard Gothic, and many of our own citizens have indulged in much architectural talk on the subject. Those who admire the construction of the building, claim that it is after the style of the twelfth century—that is, the Gothic in its incipient state, when it had not yet lost its Norman and Romanesque character. Whatever may be the opinion of the critics, the public seems disposed to regard the building as a handsome edifice, well adapted to the purpose for which it was intended. "Touching these disquisitions on architecture," Ruggles remarked, as the carriage rolled up the gravelled avenue in front of the Institute—

"The architectural subject is about as great a *do* as there is going. It is one

of those indefinite themes that you cannot take hold of fairly and squarely like almost anything else, and so you are led through a mysterious maze of grand terms which may mean something or nothing, and if you ask to be enlightened, the explanation is more puzzling than what went before it. Of all talk, save me from architectural talk."

Our visitors, after taking a view of the outside, entered the building, and were soon occupied with the thousands of curiosities of the Museum, which contains, beside many specimens from foreign countries, almost everything which inhabits the water, earth, and air of North America, all mounted in life-like manner by skilful taxidermists. There are also here all sorts of articles and objects, which would require volumes to describe.

After a hasty inspection of the museum collection, the sightseers visited the Regent's room, which is used by the officers of the Institute in their meetings. In it are deposited some of the personal effects of James Smithson, the founder of the Institution, comprising trunks, cane, sword, &c., also a painting by Berghman. On the walls are likenesses of Taney, Rush of Pennsylvania, and Senator Pearce of Maryland, and a marble head of St. Cecilia, by Thorwaldsen.

In the library they spent some time in turning over the large collection of etchings and engravings by celebrated painters and engravers—Albert Durer, Rembrandt, Claude Lorraine, Hollar, Bega, and others. The library contains about twenty-five thousand volumes, in various languages, on subjects connected with art and science, many of which have been donated to the Institute.

Between the library and the museum is a large hall, which seems to be devoted to works of art. It contains some tolerably good paintings, the most meritorious of which, perhaps, is the full-length of Guizot, by Healy. Among the indifferently executed, may be classed the portraits of Thomas Corum and Washington, and, as an unmitigated daub, the historical picture of Marion offering a potato dinner to the British officer. This hall also contains a number of pieces of statuary in marble and plaster—Venus de Medici, Minerva, and Apollo Belvidere from Pompeii, one or two others, and some groups intended as designs for the Capitol. The busts of the Petrich family—seven or eight in number, seemed to be regarded by our visitors as the comic

feature of the collection. The round heads of these busts vary from cocoanut size upward. Ruggles thought they would make a well-assorted set of ten-pin balls.

Beside these, are twenty to thirty bust portraits of celebrated characters.

The objects which next engaged their attention were those in the south hall, the most prominent of which is the sarcophagus, supposed to have at one time contained the remains of a Roman emperor. It was brought from Syria by one of the United States naval commanders, and offered to General Jackson as a fit receptacle for his bones "when life's fitful fever should be o'er," but which the old hero declined to receive, alleging as a reason that the sarcophagus of a Roman emperor was not an appropriate repository for the remains of a Republican President.

A living alligator from Georgia, in turn, was duly inspected by the party, and called by Miss Mary "a horrid thing," which one of the attendants of the Institute informed them was what all the ladies called it.

The idols from Central America, placed in this part of the building, excite considerable interest. The largest of them is carved in black basalt, and was obtained from one of the aboriginal temples. There are other statues here taken from the same neighbourhood, which are considerably mutilated, having been buried a great many years. There are also some vases in this collection, in which the bones and ashes of the dead were packed, after decomposition of the flesh or the burning of it had taken place.

In the museum, is the largest meteorite in the country, with the exception of the one from Texas at Yale College. This meteorite was obtained by one of the United States naval commanders at Saltillo, and is said to have been found in the neighbourhood of Santa Rosa, Mexico. When first seen by the naval officer, who brought it to this country, it was used as an anvil. This meteorite weighs 252 pounds, and is believed by some of the learned men to be of lunar origin.

Up stairs, in the gallery of art, as it is called, are hung nearly a couple of hundred Indian portraits, of which very few are good.

"These aborigines are worse than the alto-relievos in the rotunda of the Capitol," said Alice. "It was hardly worth

our while to mount such a long stairway. However these pictures serve a purpose by encouraging young artists, in showing them how much better their own productions are than those which they see here."

"How hard the flesh looks on some of them," observed the *Trumpet* man. "The faces seem as if they would be good places to straighten crooked nails on."

The young ladies feeling somewhat fatigued, concluded to postpone the further examination of the interior of the Institute, and devote the balance of the day to shopping, of which they said they were never tired. They descended, were assisted into their carriage, and the gentlemen took leave of them.

When the ladies had gone, Ruggles and Clavers, arm in arm, walked for an hour or so through the grounds, apparently engaged in earnest conversation, the former, who seemed dejected, being the principal talker.

After walking in this way for some time, Ruggles, with a sigh, said, as if resuming the conversation—

"Yes, I have loved Alice since she was quite a little girl, and from the time I first edited the *Trumpet*. I used to see the bright-eyed little creature when she was twelve or thirteen, from the window of my office, playing merrily with her little companions, and her silvery laugh came gaily to my ears and lightened many an hour of weary labour. Occasionally her father came to see me on business matters connected with the journal, and brought her with him. She used to say she liked to hear the clickety-click, as she called it, made by the compositors in setting type, and to see their regular swinging motion over their cases. But," digressed Ruggles a little as the technicalities of his craft came up in his mind, "the easy swinging motion is not common to all compositors. It is only those who understand their business properly who possess that grace. Bless you, I had one old fellow who never could swing, but dived after his types with a jerk and a duck, like a chicken after corn. I recollect one day, she asked old Griggs, that was his name, why he did not set like the others, which was touching him on a very tender point, and to our surprise the grim old fellow looked quite gentle over his spectacles, and answered, 'Too late, my little miss—you can't teach an old dog new tricks.' She was such a bright little thing, you see everybody

took to her, even old Griggs. I taught her how to hold the stick in her little hand, the position of the letters, and how to make the clickety-click with her thumb."

"As she grew older her occasional visits to the office with her father ceased; but as I had grown on a familiar footing with her family, I had frequent opportunities of noting the gradual merging of the child into the woman. When she had reached eighteen, many a young fellow of our town had been drawn into the maelstrom of her fascinations," said Ruggles, who, as the reader has doubtless remarked already, was given to the use of strong figures. "But, by Jove! sir, it was no use. Bouquets and drives and parties wouldn't melt her, and still they ran after her like a lot of juveniles after a butterfly. You have seen the youngsters chasing the insect. One throws his hat over it, and thinks he has it to a dead certainty—slowly and cautiously removes the hat, and, to the astonishment of the juvenile, the fly is gone! but there it is again a little distance off, lazily flapping its gossamer wings in the sun, and enticing the youngster to a renewal and more vigorous chase. By Jove! how she used to laugh with them and at them. She was head and shoulders above them in mind, and they could not throw the ball with her when it came to intelligent talking. Always full of life and spirits, she seemed to live for the sake of living, as if she were going to live for ever on this earth in beauty and health and happiness. I think sometimes, if she were schooled by an affliction of some kind, the discipline might do her good, and make her more tender and thoughtful. And yet," queried Ruggles, "I doubt whether I could love her any better if she were free from fault. Petruchio loved Katherine, you know, for her faults. No," added Ruggles, reflectively, "I believe I would not like to see her change in aught except the manner with which she receives my suit."

"Well, I made a goose of myself like the rest of them and followed in her train, and for years she has twitted and laughed at me, scolded and praised me, until I am as much enslaved by her as ever Anthony was by Cleopatra.

"About this time I began to be considered what we call a rising man. My position as editor of the *Trumpet* brought me before the people; I was talked of as a candidate for Congress, and a couple

of days before the convention met, I was the man agreed upon by the delegates; but I was so much enamoured with Alice that when her mother, who was ambitious of political distinction for her husband, requested me to waive my claims for preferment, that her husband's chances might be enhanced, I withdrew my own name, although urged not to do so by my friends, in favour of John Dobbs. I worked hard for the nomination of Dobbs, as did also my friends, whom I brought over to his support, and we obtained it after a struggle. From that time I have been his mouth-piece. I toiled early and late in the canvass, making speeches, and writing for my paper, and Dobbs was elected. And, as you see, I have followed him here to still act as his mouth-piece, and to be near his daughter, leaving my paper in the hands of a subordinate, when I ought to be conducting it myself. I have never spoken of these matters to any one but yourself, Clavers, but I felt that I must tell you what I have done to gain the affections of that girl. You are a noble young fellow, so different from the young men one usually meets, I felt as if I must relieve myself of the load which I have borne—as Sinbad the sailor carried the old man of the mountain—for many a weary day. Nothing in her conduct, so far as I know, indicates a decided preference for any one. I have never asked her if she could reciprocate my feelings towards her—I have never had the courage to do so. Whenever the conversation seemed to be drifting toward the subject nearest my heart, she always evasively shifted it into a different channel. Then, you know, she is so full of her badinage, it is difficult to get her to talk seriously. She is ambitious, too, like her mother. I told her once in a spirit of raillery that the price of her love was eternal vigilance and about ten thousand dollars a year, when she made me the target of half-a-dozen sharp repartees for my impudence.

“So I have gone on, propping up the simple, good-natured man, her father, whom, with your penetration, you must have suspected of being a sham before this. You may have observed, too, that the wife's individuality so overtops that of her husband, that she acts and thinks for him. She is an energetic, managing woman, fond of this public life, and devoted to what she conceives to be the interests of her family, the most important of which is to marry her daughters

to rich and distinguished men. You may have remarked how affable she is toward Cronier—it is homage rendered to his title. She is fond of nibbling at this kind of bait, like many others of our simple Republicans, who profess admiration for our form of government, and do homage to the institutions of royalty, in paying court to its titles.

“Since I have been here I have received letters from old political friends in my district, in which they urge me to throw over Dobbs at the next convention, and there are old wheel-horses of the party, who have stood shoulder to shoulder with me through thick and thin. They say I must do it in justice to them if not to myself, and that on account of what they call my former self-abnegation my election will be certain. But I cannot do it. My destiny is intertwined with that of this family, and I cannot extricate myself. I could more easily change my nature than transfer my affections from her on whom they are placed to another. I have arrived at the condition of old Griggs—I can't learn new tricks.

“Something impels me to bestow my confidence in your keeping, as the ancient mariner was forced to impose his story upon the unwilling wedding-guest, and perhaps, like him, I weary my listener.”

On receiving from Clavers assurances to the contrary, Ruggles continued—

“You are such a good Samaritan, going about binding up wounds of mind and body, I know you will feel for me. I have seen you around the hospitals attending to the wants of the brave fellows maimed in battle, although you try to do it so slily, and I have heard of you speaking soothing words to the unfortunate, although you profess to be so grim. You seldom seem to be in earnest when you are talking in society—one must go to the abode of misfortune and poverty to find out your true nature—”

The listener here interrupted Ruggles, and begged him to dispense with his compliments, and proceed with whatever he might have yet to say.

“Now, perhaps, I come to my real motive in laying my heart open to you.” continued Ruggles. “I fear that you will become a rival. It may be that I attach too much importance to your attentions to Alice—it may only be a pastime for you. But these attentions, whatever may be their object, make me unhappy. You are comparatively a new-

comer—you have known her but a short time, and your affections, supposing they are at all touched, cannot be seriously engaged, while I have served a long apprenticeship. Remember the sacrifices that I have made, and I must still make, and then judge between your own and my claims to the hand of Alice, and ask yourself if she *can* be as essential to your happiness as she is to mine. I appeal to that noble nature, which you hide under a stern face, to decide between us."

As Ruggles finished his confession, he looked with solicitude into the face of his listener, to try and read his thoughts. A pause occurred—the latter remaining

impassible and absorbed, and he who told his story anxious and expectant. He to whom the appeal was made seemed as if he would never break the silence. At length he said, in his usual cold manner—

"And you say the mother and daughter are ambitious of position and wealth?"

"Yes; but the mother more than the daughter."

Another pause, which ended by Clavers saying, as he walked away—

"Good evening."

"Have you nothing further to say?" asked Ruggles.

"Nothing."

And he was gone.

(To be continued.)

DO GOOD TO ALL.

THE sparkling streams that sweetly flow
In healthful waters here below,
To cheer and gladden all around,
In quiet silver notes resound,
Do good to all.

The waving grass, the modest flower,
The sturdy oak in lofty power,
Make earth, and beast, and man rejoice,
And utter forth, in thrilling voice,
Do good to all.

The feathered tribes that soar on high,
The earth, the sea, the air and sky,
To bless one theme united sing,
And to our hearts this motto bring,
Do good to all.

The glowing message from above,
Inwrought with gems of purest love,
And moral sense enstamp'd so fair
On man, in unison declare,
Do good to all

GIGANTIC RACES.

ALTHOUGH individuals of incredible stature have been occasionally seen, the word giant must be considered not only comparative as regarding primary races, but in many instances allegorical. Thus the Hebrew words *Nophel* and *Giboor* did not signify giants, as commonly translated, but cruel and violent men. Athletic power and uncommon energies were naturally associated with the idea of supernatural stature, though intellectual accomplishments were not always included in the association.

In temperate climates the height of the human race averages from four feet and a half to six feet, but occasional instances have been met with of men reaching eight and nine feet—nay, some authors go so far as ten and eighteen; but the latter assertions seem to refer to fossil bones attributed to man, but which evidently belonged to other animals. Buffon mentions gigantic human bones discovered at Lucerne, but which upon examination Blumenbach pronounced to be the remains of an elephant. Halicot, in his work called *Gigantosteologia*, describes bones found in a sepulchre in Dauphiny over which was a stone inscribed *TEUTOBOCCUS REX*: this skeleton was twenty-five feet and a half high, and ten feet broad at the shoulder. Riolan, the celebrated anatomist, disputes the fact; and in his book entitled *Gigantomachia* positively affirms also that they belonged to an elephant. It is worthy of remark, that in this controversy each party considered his opinion and decision of sufficient weight to need no illustration, and therefore neither of them thought it necessary to confirm his *dixit* by drawings and engravings of the questionable remains. Such is the vanity of the learned! An infallible philosopher informs us that Adam's stature was one hundred and twenty-three feet nine inches; Eve's, one hundred and eighteen feet nine inches and three quarters; Noah's, twenty feet short of Adam's; Abraham's, twenty-eight feet; Moses', thirteen; and Hercules', ten.

That the first races of man were of larger dimensions than those of our contemporaries, has ever been a general opinion.

Not only have our forefathers been

considered more gigantic in stature, but of more vigorous power.

It is, however, obvious, that former races, although they might have excelled the present generation in vigour from the nature of their education and pursuits, could not claim any pre-eminence in stature. The remains of human bones found in tombs, and Egyptian mummies, demonstrate this fact most clearly: and the armour, helmets, and breastplates of the ancients confirm it. Their swords were as light, nay, much lighter in many instances, than those of the present day; and those enormous ones of the times of chivalry were only wielded to inflict one overwhelming blow with both hands, and could scarcely be recovered for protection.

Ancient writers corroborate this opinion. Homer, when speaking of a fine man, gives him four cubits in height and one in breadth. Vitruvius fixes the usual standard of man at six Roman feet: the giant Gabbarus mentioned by Pliny did not exceed nine feet. Aristotle's admeasurement of beds was six feet; and certainly the doorways of ancient edifices by no means indicated taller inmates than our present generation. It is therefore pretty clear that the supposed fossil remains of gigantic human bones belonged to the *Megatherium*, the *Palotherium*, and other individuals, which certainly prove that in remote ages there existed animals of much larger dimensions than any now in being, though we have no reason to suppose that this variety extended to our species.

The origin of the fabled giants has led to marvellous disquisitions. Many fathers of the church, amongst whom we may quote St. Cyprian, St. Ambrosius, St. Chrysostom, St. Cyrillius, Lactantius, Tertullian, and several others, gravely maintain that giants were the favoured offspring of holy maidens and angels. This may seem an impious conclusion, since the gigantic monsters of sacred history were anything but angelic; for the Canaaneans, the Moabites, and the sons of Anak, descended from giants (compared with whom the Israelites seemed as grasshoppers), were most ferocious,

and their land devoured its inhabitants (though Neuman gives a different signification to the scriptural passage, which according to his paraphrase merely meant "that the number of inhabitants was so great, that they eat up all the land"); Og, king of Bashan, whose country was delivered into the hands of Israel, had an iron bedstead nine cubits in length and four cubits in breadth; and Goliath, the reproach of Israel, was six cubits and a span (which according to Cumberland makes eleven feet English) in stature. It is therefore difficult to imagine why so many saints considered giants as an angelic progeny.

To the present day, however, we find various races distinguished by their elevated stature. Humboldt says, that the Guayaqulists measure six feet and a half, and the Payaguas are equally tall, while the Caribbees of Cumana are distinguished by their almost gigantic size from all the other nations he had met with in the New World. Hearne saw in the cold regions north of Canada individuals of six feet four inches. The Patagonians, or Tehuels, were stated by Pigafitta and the Spanish early navigators as measuring seven feet four inches; and although it appears that this account is exaggerated, more recent travellers, amongst whom we may name Bougainville, Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Carteret, and Falkner, affirm that their height ranges from six to seven feet.

From the best authenticated observations, it appears that the tallest persons on respectable record, did not, according to Haller, exceed nine feet. A young man from Huntingdonshire was exhibited many years ago in London, and measured about eight feet at the age of seventeen; he was, as usual, born of the ordinary size, but began to grow most rapidly; his sister was of great height, and all his family were remarkably tall.

Dwarfs generally die from premature old age, and giants from exhaustion. A curious instance of marvellous growth is recorded in a tract called "*Prodigium Willinghamense*," or an account of a surprising boy who was born at Willingham, near Cambridge, and upon whom the following epitaph was written:—"Stop, traveller, and wondering know, here buried lie the remains of Thomas, son of Thomas and Margaret Hall; who, not one year old, had the signs of manhood; at three, was almost four feet high, endued with uncommon strength, a just

proportion of parts, and a stupendous voice; before six, he died as it were at an advanced age." Mr. Dawker, a surgeon of St. Ives, Huntingdon, who published this account, viewed him after death, and the corpse exhibited all the appearances of decrepit old age. This is a confirmation of the case of the boy of Salamis, mentioned by Pliny as being four feet high, and having reached puberty at the age of three; and may also confirm the account of the man seen by Craterus, the brother of Antigonus, who in seven years was an infant, a youth, an adult, a father, an old man, and a corpse.

The experiment of Dr. Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, to ascertain the influence of food in promoting extraordinary growth, is curious. He selected for this purpose an orphan child of the name of Macgrath, and by dint of feeding, at the age of sixteen he had grown to the height of seven feet; but his organization had been so exhausted by this forced process, that he died in a state of moral and physical decay at the age of twenty.

In the development of organized bodies, the effects of light contribute materially. Dr. Edwards, an English physician in Paris, and one of our most distinguished physiologists, has shown that by excluding tadpoles from the light, they will grow to double and triple their ordinary size, but are not metamorphosed into frogs.

The influence of food on the changes of animals is further shown in the aphidivorous flies, that are larvæ for eight or ten days, pupæ for about a fortnight, and perfect insects in about the same time, in the whole living about six weeks; whereas a pupa deprived of food underwent no change, and lived for twelve months. Rapid development of the organism invariably brings on premature dissolution. A case is recorded of a girl who cut four teeth at the end of the first fortnight; walked about, and had hair reaching to the middle of her back after the seventh month; she perished in a state of exhaustion in her twelfth year.

Precocious mental attainments are frequently as destructive of life as a rapid growth. The wonderful Baratier, at the age of four, spoke and read Latin, French, and German; was an excellent Greek scholar at six; and when ten years of age, translated the scriptures from the Hebrew; at nineteen he died of exhaustion. The vulgar saying, "The child is too

clever to live," is founded upon observation. These early specimens of superior intellect are sometimes followed by a state of imbecility. Antiochus tells us that Hermogenes, who was a celebrated rhetorician at fourteen years, was ignorant in the extreme at twenty-four. Tall men generally produce children of high stature. The inhabitants of Potsdam are remarkable for their height. Haller states that his own family were distinguished by their tallness, without excepting one single grandchild, although they were very numerous.

In the hereditary transmission of physical and moral qualities, many curious observations have been made. Women of high mental attainments have been known to produce children of genius, more frequently than men of a superior intellect; although Haller relates the singular case of two noble females who married wealthy idiots on account of their fortunes, and from whom this melancholy defect had extended for a century into several families, so that some of all their descendants still continued idiots in the fourth and fifth generation.

Amongst animals, gigantic races no longer inhabit the regions which bore them in ancient times. An extensive whale-fishery was once carried on at Biariz, in the Gulf of Gascony; and the

hippopotamus is no longer to be seen on the banks of the Nile.

Gigantic bones having been occasionally discovered with the remains of men and horses and fragments of armour, it has been imagined that in ancient times armies were attended by terrific giants; but it is more than probable that these large fragments of departed warriors belonged to their war-elephants, which with their horses were not unfrequently immolated on their master's tomb.

Skeletons of giants were considered by the ancients as curious as in the present day; and those of Secondilla and Pusio were carefully preserved in the gardens of Sallust.

Some naturalists have maintained that giants had more numerous vertebræ than ordinary men; but this has not been confirmed by observation, nor has it been found that the spinal bones of dwarfs are in smaller number.

Schreber, who has collected the description of the principal modern giants, found few above seven feet and a half; although he mentions a Swedish peasant of eight feet Swedish measure, and one of the guards of the Duke of Brunswick eight feet six inches Dutch. Not so Hakewill, who informs us, from the testimony of Nannez, that the Emperor of China had archers and porters fifteen feet high.

A HAUNTED LIFE.

A SAILOR'S STORY.

SOME people believe in ghosts, and some people don't. Similarly, I do. Similarly, some of the ladies and gentlemen here may believe them to be all humbug. Every one has a right to have his own opinion, and to believe in it, and to stick hard by it ; and I hold to mine.

Mates ! I'm going to tell you a story of a man who was haunted.

The man's name might be Dick or Tom, or Brown or Jones. He might have been old, and might have been young. He might have been a soldier or a sailor. He might and he mightn't have been a good-looking chap. To save trouble, suppose the chap was me, and that his Christian name was Ralph.

Ralph was a sailor born and bred—just like me, mates. He'd been roughly used by the world—roughly used, and he didn't feel grateful for the world's hard usage—just like me, mates. He had nobody in the world to care twopence for, nobody who cared twopence for him or his, nobody who would have given two-pence to save him if he had been drowning out in the sea there in sight of land ; neither wife, nor children, nor relations—like me again. Not a good-tempered man, nor a happy man, nor an out-and-out bad man ; but just one of those poor grumbling rascals who find no favour with empty-headed women. Call him Ralph, I say, and fancy I'm him, for the fun of the thing.

That there fagot isn't brighter than Ralph's heart was when he was a boy ; he had a heart then. But hard work and blows and poor pay don't make one better or truer. So in course of time Ralph became blacker and wickeder than most men of his age. Remember, he had no learning, and he couldn't govern himself as some worse men can. He daundered along in his rough way, not much liked by his chums, fond of being alone, and accustomed to drink more than was good for him. Then, all at once, he began to think the world wasn't so bad after all. He got out of bed one morning and found himself—what think ye?—in love. Now mark you, mates. That there fagot isn't fiercer, fuller of fire, than Ralph's heart was when he found that the

woman he loved didn't care a pin for him.

It was hard ! it was hard ! How came he to fall in love ? In this way.

After years and years of toiling and grubbing on board ship, Ralph saved money ; not much, but enough to live on for a year or so. Thinks he, I'll cut this here life for a time, and rest on my oars in private. So he puts his money in a savings bank, ready to be drawed on, and rigs himself out, and determines to settle down. Where shall it be ? thinks Ralph. Well, sick as he was of life on board ship, he couldn't bear to be far away from the sea. He liked to see it, and smell it, and hear it roar ; he was used to it, you know ; it was rough and gloomy like him, and he found it company. At first he couldn't make up his mind. He spoke to a shipmate of his, whose name might be Harry, and Harry clapped him on the shoulder and said he knew a place that would just suit Ralph ; the very place where Harry was born, and where Harry's wife was still living. Down went Ralph and his mate to the place, and everything seemed suitable. It was a little queer town quite close to the sea, and its name for the matter of that, might have been Scuttleton.

Ralph rented a lodging in the town, and Harry introduced him to his wife. Harry's wife was a ruddy, comely little body, not pretty to speak of, but with uppish airs of her own, and she had a little one. Ralph didn't see much in her at first, though he envied his mate his comforts in the house. Well, Harry stayed some days in the place, and the two had plenty of fun together. At last Harry had to go away a long voyage, going on board a ship fitted out to search for a great admiral, who had been lost in attempting to find out the North-West passage. Harry's wife was cut up awful ; she wept and cried, and begged and prayed of Harry not to trust himself on such a stray venture ; but he had made up his mind, and it was all of no use. Before he goes, he brings his wife to Ralph, and, shaking hands, says, " Mate, I'm going on a dangerous chase, and maybe I shall never come back to the

old place again. If so be, mate, take care of the little woman here—comfort her, mate; see she don't come to trouble of any kind; be a kind of father to her, mate." Harry's wife sobbed and moaned, begging him to stay, but it was talking to a rock. In the midst of it all, Ralph says, "Mate, if so be you never return, I'll protect the little woman like a sort of father. If ever I do wrong by the little woman, mate, and you dead or alive, may you come alive or dead to punish me: if alive, to pluck my heart out; if dead, to haunt me till the day of my death for ever and ever."

Ralph meant it, mates. He promised, and he meant to act all fair and above board. So he did for a time, though not for long. Harry sailed away then and there, and Ralph kept watch over the little woman. He couldn't help it! She was so pretty, and tender, and homely like, that he couldn't help it. Yes; Harry hadn't sailed many weeks when that there promise was broken, and Ralph fell head over ears in love with Harry's wife.

The more she came to him, with her tender wife's face, and chatted with him, and joked with him, for his mate's sake, the more Ralph loved her. The more kind and true she was to him in health or sickness, the more she smiled on him and confided in him for his mate's sake, the more Ralph loved her. The more she talked to him of his mate, of her love, of her mate's goodness, the more bitter Ralph felt at heart. The more she laid her warm little hand in his, and looked kindly up into his face, and talked of his mate's child, and wondered how soon Harry would return to his home, the oftener Ralph said to himself, to his own heart, that he begged and prayed Harry might die far away and never return at all.

The little woman lived at a place, never mind its name, some six miles from the town where Ralph lived; but often enough she would come into the town visiting, and Ralph and she would go down to the sea-shore, and sit there, and talk about Harry. Her whole heart was with him; even death could scarce have taken it from him. Ralph saw this plainer and plainer every time he met her. His better nature advised him to make a bolt, and ship for some foreign port; but a strange sort of something held him there—held him in spite of himself. I have said that Ralph was not a chap as could hide his feelings. They must come out, and love

or hatred was the same. So the little woman soon began to guess that Harry's mate cared more for her than he ought to, so being as he meant well. She became shy of Ralph, and though not a sharp-sighted chap in a general way, it didn't give him much bother to see that the little woman knew his secret; they both understood each other, but both kept their tongues quiet. He tried everything in his power to make her like him; but it was no use, her heart was far away. Every day she tried harder to keep out of his way, and to make him understand that she was another's property; and every day the flame in Ralph's bosom was blown into a stronger blaze, and every day it became more and more unbearable. For a long time, at least what seemed a long time to him, she managed to keep out of his way. When they met again she seemed to have conquered some of her distrust of him, and she came down a bit. Fool—for he was as great a fool as ever was, strong and hardy though he were—he began to think that there was hope that she might like him yet.

I don't mean to say that Ralph was an honest man, but there was something honest about him. All the time he was burning with this passion he remembered his promise to his old mate, and he would not—though keeping it in half choked him—say to his mate's wife, "Forget everybody and everything, and I'll take care of you." He might have said this at any time, but he wouldn't—he couldn't—because of his promise.

One day there comes news that Harry's ship was lost, and that every soul on board had perished. The poor little woman was like to go out of her senses with grief, and if it hadn't been just for the great hope she had, she surely would have gone mad. Ralph was like to go out of his senses too, but from a very different cause. She was free: the only woman to whom his stubborn heart had ever done homage could now be fairly wooed. There was an open field for him, and he was determined to win. He did not wait very long after the arrival of the news before he told her of his love, and prayed and besought her, with more tenderness than he ever thought himself that he possessed, to become his wife. She turned from him, and told him that she meant to prove true to her husband's memory, and it might be that he would yet return. Ralph endeavoured to persuade her out of this determination, but

to no purpose. She grew angry, and reminded him of his promise to Harry. Ralph felt this more than if he had been put in irons and flogged for misdemeanour. He left her, and went straight to an inn, which might be the Old Anchor. He called for brandy, and drank heavily. He cursed and grumbled at his unlucky fate. Every curse seemed to make him more thirsty, and every fresh glass to make him curse the more. At length he had to be carried up to a bedroom, and put to bed by the ostler.

After that day he drank a good deal. He sulked at everything and everybody; and what betwixt the drink and the disappointment, the little good that was in him was crushed out. People say that good can never be crushed out of a man; that if it is there, it will stick there; but I mean to say that Ralph had some good in him before this happened, and that it was all ground into nothing afterwards—and very soon afterwards, too. He was a passionate man, Ralph, and revengeful. This disposition led him into the committal of many acts for which he was afterwards sorry. Still, he might have been a much better man if the world had used him better. As it was, he was a rough, uneducated, but, on the whole, not a bad-natured fellow, if you touched the proper key-note of his character. He altered much for the worse after the refusal from his mate's widow. He was subject to fierce fits of black despondency, only made worse by the drink, of which he partook for the express purpose of curing it. He was standing before the fire of the little snugger of the Old Anchor one evening when the last coach came into the yard. He looked out of the window at the frozen travellers (for it was December), watching them with a surly eye, and some of the passengers did not seem at all honoured by his notice. But Ralph wasn't minding them, though his eyes were turned in their direction. His thoughts were far away, with some one who was supposed to be lying cold and stiff out yonder. The passengers were by this in the house and about to commence supper. There was a clatter of knives and forks, and sounds of laughing and talking. The door of the room in which Ralph was sitting was opened, and a bluff, hearty sort of man entered—just the man that would not suit with Ralph's humour. The stranger soon spoke:

"Well, mate, what's the best news in the little town of Scuttleton?"

Ralph started, stared hard at the man, and then exclaimed, joyfully, "Harry!" and the man cried "Ralph!" and so it was, mates, that them two chums had come together again. At first Ralph was really glad that Harry had been saved; but he felt a kind of a queerness about the love-matters. He did not think Harry would be very well pleased to learn that the man whom he left in charge of his little wife had been trying to get her for himself. Harry was all hope and joy. He asked Ralph about his wife again and again. He talked of his happiness, of his intention to set up in some kind of business, and not to go to sea any more; for though he had been wrecked, he had been taken on board an Australian ship and carried off to the diggings. He got a little bit of ground and set to work; he was very successful, and soon had as much as would take him to England, and have something by him besides. So here he was, alive and hearty, panting to get to his journey's end. Then he began to talk about his boy, and the little woman who would be sure to have his tea ready for him when he came, and would be ready herself to rush into his arms and give him a genuine hug, and a regular downright loving kiss. Every word he spoke went like a dagger to the envious heart of Ralph; every new expectation of pleasure which made itself visible on his companion's face or in his voice was like a fiend taunting him with his own loneliness. He drank, and Harry drank. Harry thought of the bustling little body by the cottage fire who was waiting for him, and Ralph brooded gloomily over the comforts of his mate compared with his own. He magnified the happiness of Harry into something great, and then sat and scowled at him for presuming to own such a treasure. What right had he to it? thought Ralph: and every time he asked himself that question, and saw his mate sitting there grinning and laughing as hearty as could be, he was goaded into the idea of doing something desperate—of throwing the beer-pot at him, or something. And that fagot there, in Ralph's bosom, burned fiercer and fiercer every moment.

It was getting late: there were scarcely any strangers in the house but Harry and Ralph, and they still sat drinking. What fiend was it that tempted him to stay at the inn that night and proceed in the

morning? And what fiend was it that made him talk of murder? I can't say how it came about, but somehow Harry, when he got touched with the rum and brandy he had been drinking, began telling about the death of a man in the bush, —slain by the man who had been his friend for years. Harry described the manner of the deed, and how the man escaped with all the money. Ralph sat staring at him whilst he went on, and—ay, the thought came, I don't know how, but it was there. It came, it sank down into his heart, and he felt his brain scorched and the fire in his breast steadily burning. He struggled hard with it; he wrestled with it; but there it stood beside him, goading him on with false dreams of something better. On the one side stood the man bragging of his possessions; on the other stood the woman to be won—he forgot that she had determined to keep single for her husband's sake when she thought him lost,—and between the two stood— No, no, he could not endure it. He jumped up on his feet, and made an attempt to stagger out to the street; but fate was working with the scales of right and wrong, and the wrong scale gained the balance on this night. When Ralph got to his feet, Harry insisted that he should sit down and have some more beer. Ralph wanted to get out; he wanted no beer, no brandy—only let him out. Harry caught hold of him; there was a scuffle, then some drunken maudlin tears, and more drink. It was drawing on to the morning by the time the two men went to bed. A chill, icy morning, with everything outside the house shrouded in snow. It would have been well, mates, if the snow had been cold enough to quench the fire which was burning itself out, slowly but surely consuming the heart where it lay.

Everything was very still. All had long been to roost—the wind was hushed, and the watch-dog lay quietly sleeping in his kennel. Stealthily, stealthily, across the lobby tripped the hidden murderer. One little ray of the half-moon, shining for a moment upon something which glittered like steel. Stealthily, stealthily, a bedroom door was opened, and—a dead body was found there next morning.

Well, you see, Ralph—that's the chap I'm telling you about—slipped out of the inn and made off. He was scarcely sober even then, and during the whole of that day he slunk amongst some rocks that stood about two miles from the

town. At first he could not properly understand what he had done. His head was confused, he felt stunned, dead to every sense and faculty, save the one thought that he must get away from that place. He cared nothing as to where he went, or how he went; he only wanted to go somewhere. That long, long day came at length to a close, and the darkness seemed to him as a friend come to rescue him from—he knew not what. He stole along by the shore towards the town, till he reached the place where he had a small boat lying. With little noise he cut the cable of the boat and pushed out to sea. He had some idea that he would be safe there; but it soon occurred to him that he must get away from the place altogether; that he had no provisions, and he began to feel the want of food. Hunger recalled his deadened faculties: slowly the full conviction of the deed he had done dawned upon him, and he lay down in the little boat and groaned. The daylight stole upon him as he lay.

But he was a rough chap, this Ralph, as I have said, and used to hard knocks; so he soon came round. Then he made up his mind that the best thing to be done was to get to the opposite shore: that was about ten miles off a pull, and he had only one oar. However, he was now roused to a sense of his position, and he set to work. There's no use telling you every little thing that he did. He reached the shore, and afterwards got on to Liverpool. There he saw his name and a description of his person in the *Hue and Cry*. He disguised himself as well as he could, and it was not long before he got an engagement on board a schooner bound for Newfoundland. It was early in December, and the wind and cold was awful.

Off they sailed, Ralph and his mates—a rough lot—in their dirty nutshell of a ship, with the wind hissing behind them and the hail beating in their faces, and a round red sun staring like a great fiery eye down on the heaving sea. Ralph took a wild pleasure in struggling in the rain and snow, and hearing the wind whistle, and watching the great sun above. The thought of what he had done followed him, but the hard work and the noise helped to drive it away. He felt reckless and devil-may-care at these times. But somehow or other, now and then the wind fell, the waves sunk with a sound like a woman sobbing, and

the red sun looked silent overhead, and the white snow fell in a silver mist right down from the sky, that was as grey as glass is, and the snow seemed to Ralph like something awful out of God. He was frightened, mates ; he couldn't bear those silent tunes. It put him in mind of dead men and ghosts in their shrouds, and something that he might have been if he had kept true to his mate. Well, in the midst of it all, in the midst of the dazzling clouds of the snow, mates, he saw Harry's face, white, pale, and dreadful, looking at him with a light in his eyes like the light of that red sun ; and he heard Harry's voice, like the sound of the falling snow, saying : " Mate, for the little woman's sake, and after the promise you have broken, I'll haunt you till the day of your death, for ever and ever."

Ralph didn't mind this much at first, and when he got the chance he drowned thoughts like them in grog. Then the drink used to make a devil of him, and he'd yell and scream and fight, till his mates had to tie him down in the hold with ropes, like a mad dog. By and by, however, even the drink didn't prove any sort of a comfort to him, and instead of making him mad, it made him moody, gloomy, and for the matter of that, cowardly. The more he took of it, the worse and worse he grew ; but there was no resisting. At last his mates took the drink from him, and then—Ralph felt as if every sinew of his body had been cut, and he seemed to be going crazy. He got ill and weak and helpless ; but beg and pray as he might, his mates wouldn't give him a drop of the drink. Then he couldn't sleep of nights, but would sit in darkness with his head in his hands, hiding himself from a ghost that would never let him rest. It haunted him. It was a ghastly bearded face, ghastly as ice, and with wet hair about it like seaweed, and with a light like that same red sun burning in its blank eyes—mates, it was Harry's face.

Do what he could, it wouldn't leave him ; till at last Ralph became so weak and helpless that he was obliged to leave off work. His mates were hard to him ; they thought him a sneak and a coward ; and at last he crept into his berth and fell into a long sleep, like a dream, from which he never wakened for many days. But Harry's face was with him in his dreams, awing and haunting him, and hunting him down.

In course of time, however, Ralph got

on his weather-legs once more ; and when the vessel reached harbour he was sort of tough and strong again. But the face wouldn't leave him, and it drove him to the drink again. For years he lived a landsman's life in them foreign parts ; toiling, drubbing, grumbling, and drinking more than ever. But Harry's blood still lay upon Ralph's conscience like a curse ; it wouldn't come out, mates. Well, by and by he made a little money ; and at last, when he could bear the pain no longer, he determined to pay a visit to Old England again. Thinks he, " Maybe Harry's ghost will rest quieter if I find out Harry's wife, and, unbeknown to her, settle this here hard-earned money on her and hers. It's too late to undo what's done, but mayhap I can do something to let my mate sleep quiet in his grave."

Mates ! Ralph was hunted on by Harry's face till he stood once again on English ground, dressed as a common sailor, and with every shilling of his earnings in his pockets. But when he came to the place where Harry's wife used to live, he found her dead and buried by the side of Harry. What was Ralph to do ? 'Twas too late to make amends, so, with Harry's face still haunting him, he set sail again for foreign parts, and—and—

That's all !

The mate paused. In his excitement he had risen to his feet. His face was flushed, and he stood with his right hand extended, as if to ward off the blow of some invisible opponent. Suddenly he dropped into his seat, and covered his face with his hands, trembling violently. There was a silence of some minutes, during which we all stared at him in mute astonishment. There was something painfully real in the narrative to which we had been listening, and the abrupt termination left an impression upon us of doubt as to whether or not we had heard the confession of a guilt-haunted conscience.

The landlord, who, after re-entering the room, had never removed his eyes from Ralph during the whole time he had been speaking, now rose. He seemed to be troubled about something, and his face had lost a great deal of its rubicund colour. He spoke very slowly and solemnly ; still watching keenly every movement of Ralph, who became more and more agitated as he went on.

" Friends, I have been listening with

feelings of pleasure to the stories which have been told to us to-night. I find that I also have a tale to tell, and I am afraid that it will cause pain, and interrupt the enjoyment of this company; but it must be told."

There was an expression of anxiety on every countenance. Ralph's agitation increased.

"One December night, ten years ago, there arrived at this house, by the last coach, a seaman who had returned to England after some years' absence, and was on his way to meet his wife and child. That seaman's name was Henry Hardman."

Ralph started, but instantly checked himself. I also started, and, trembling in every limb, cried, "My father!"

The landlord looked at me, and, for the first time since my arrival at his house, recognised me. Beseeching me to restrain my feelings, he continued:—

"Henry Hardman had not been here more than an hour when he met an old friend, and he decided upon waiting till the morning to complete his journey. He drank a good deal with his friend that night, and did not retire to rest till about one o'clock. His friend, instead of going home, took a bed here for that night. Henry Hardman slept in the room on the right-hand side of the lobby; his friend got the room at the end of the lobby; and the only other stranger in the house that night was an old gentleman from London. In the morning this latter person left by the coach; the day advanced, and our two other lodgers did not appear. I went upstairs with the ostler to waken them, and we found Henry Hardman lying in his bed dead, with the blood oozing from three parts of his body, where he had been stabbed with a large seaman's knife. We searched the next room for his friend, but he was gone, and nothing was ever after heard of him. That friend was the murderer, and—Ralph Mowbray—you are the man."

What followed this appears to me like a confused dream. The room swam giddily round and round. I have a hazy remembrance of a general commotion, and of my friends rising in consternation to their feet, and of Ralph jumping up and shouting, "You lie!"

Then there was a rush to the door, which at that moment burst open, and the waiter entered hurriedly, followed by two constables, who instantly laid hands

on Ralph. He struggled; but the constables, with the assistance of the captain and one or two others, managed to get him handcuffed, and then he doggedly gave in, and, without speaking another word, was taken off to prison.

Round, round, round swam the room. There was a hum and buzz of voices; a crowd of faces gathered about me, the captain's voice saying, "Hold off him, and get some brandy."

Then there was a blank, and I became insensible to all that followed.

When my consciousness returned I was lying in bed, and it was day—a sharp, cutting, frosty December day. I saw through the little window of the room the tops of houses covered with snow, and the red rays of the wintry sun stole softly in, and crept over the little dressing-table, and round the bed-curtains, and through the wall. It was Christmas-day, and I heard the church-bells ringing cheerily through the keen, clear air. Slowly the events of the previous night recurred to me, and I shuddered as I thought of the deed which had been brought to light—my poor father murdered by the man he had trusted with his home, and loved as a friend. Now I understood the cause of my mother's last visit to Scuttleton, and what hurried her into the grave. Tears stole slowly down my cheeks as I thought of my dead parents, and I sobbed aloud.

"Do you want any thing, Harry dear?" said a soft, sweet voice by my side, and, turning round, I saw Maggie. My astonishment at first prevented me from speaking; but the joy of seeing one so dear to me in such a moment of sorrow soon opened my mouth. Then there were the usual proceedings of the making-up of lovers' quarrels, kissings, explanations, &c. &c. On inquiring how she had come there, when she had renounced me and returned my letters, she told me that her father, having found out our secret, and wanting her to marry Mr. Bapp, had sent her to the country, and then, upon his own responsibility, had taken my letters from her desk, and handed them to me as from her. On returning from the country she discovered all this, and also that I was going to Sydney by the *Boomerang*. She obtained the assistance of Captain Goodheart, who was a friend, and disguised herself in male attire. She then took her post as cabin-boy, and would have remained unknown to me till

we reached Sydney, or till some circumstance occurred which would enable her to declare herself as she did now.

She had scarcely concluded this explanation, when a telegram was brought in and handed to me. It was from Holl-greeze *père*, and the manner in which he expressed his grief, and requested our return, taking the full worth of his money by making his message exactly twenty words, was quite heart-rending.

"Almost distracted—heard ship blown into Scuttleton. All shall be forgotten. If saved come back—or—gray hairs—grave—die."

The "die" was evidently cast in for the purpose of making the twentieth word; but it left us in some doubt as to whether he meant that he should die or that we should die. However, in order to prevent any unhappy consequences, we decided upon returning at once to London, and save the gray hairs from the grave yet a little while.

When our determination and reasons were made known to Captain Goodheart, he congratulated us upon the old boy coming to his senses, but grumbled about losing his cabin-boy, declaring that he had a good mind to make him stick to his bargain. Then we took leave of our late companions, who expressed their regret in parting with us, but were delighted with the little bit of romance connected with our elopement. The S. R. G. declared that he should never be miserable

any more, but be, what he really was in disposition, jolly. The quiet lady kissed Maggie, and patted her on the cheek; the G. Y. said it was a capital joke, and sighed that there was no Clementina to come after him as a cabin-boy—heigho! The cadaverous gentleman gave us his blessing, and the company in general gave us a cheer. So we went our way, and, in a week after the *Boomerang* sailed again for Sydney, at which place I believe she arrived in safety.

On reaching London we found our respected parent in ecstasies of delight. No objection was made to our immediate union, and in a very few days we became man and wife, "for better, for worse." I obtained a very satisfactory engagement, and we settled down very comfortably. We were not many weeks wed, when in one of the newspapers I found a paragraph headed, "Suicide with a rusty nail;" and on reading it, I learned that "a seaman named Ralph Mowbray, who was in prison awaiting his trial for a murder committed ten years ago, had by some means obtained possession of a large rusty nail, and with that instrument inflicted such serious injuries upon himself that he died in about six hours after, notwithstanding all the efforts of the medical officer." So ended the retribution for a past crime. Ten years of mental torture, and then—"Be sure your sins will find you out."

BARRY O'BYRNE.

By Annie Thomas, Author of "Sir Victor's Choice," "Bertie Bray," &c.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

KATHLEEN'S FAITH IS SHAKEN ON ONE
OR TWO POINTS.

GENERAL NORREYS was lavish of all things; but perhaps there was nothing of which he was so lavish as of his promises. He cast these abroad in the most reckless manner before all with whom he came in contact. His motive for doing this was probably the amiable one of striving to brighten the path of so much of the world as would listen to him, and was therefore good. But the brightness he shed was apt to be dispelled after a time, for there is no rule without an exception. General Norreys, in fact, was lavish of everything but the performance of the promises he made.

During that period of toil and misery and gloom, which Kathleen had passed over the artist's colourman's shop in Brompton Row, she had gradually diffused the rich robes which had appertained to her state as Countess of Kilcorran over a large portion of the old clothes-buying localities of London. Art, like literature, is a very useful stick to beginners, but it is an uncommonly treacherous crutch. The little bits of pictures that she had painted from the big pictures in the Vernon Gallery at the South Kensington, disposed of as she could alone dispose of them, were found utterly insufficient for her maintenance. The gay plumage was of no further use to her, so she parted with her costly wardrobe, intending to replace it with garments of a hue and texture more suited to her present calling and mode of life.

But when she went to Cintra Lodge as Lady Arden's companion and ornament-in-chief to that highly ornamented abode, the necessity was upon her of re-organizing it again after a somewhat similar style to that of bygone days. Her salary was a very large one—that is to say, her nominal salary—for General Norreys abstained from inflicting the wound upon her finer susceptibilities of instituting tangible monetary relations between them.

"You can always have what money you please, my dear," Lady Arden said to her, "and my brother will be quite

hurt if you confine yourself to the limits of the sum you are good enough to accept as compensation for bearing with a neglected old woman like me."

"General Norreys is very kind," Kate replied; "but my requirements won't go beyond my salary. If I could have some of it now, Lady Arden, it would be a great convenience to me; there are many things that I must get at once."

"Just have them at Swan and Edgars and Howell and James's, and have the bills sent in to my brother," Lady Arden suggested; but Kate declined her suggestion with rather a heightened colour, and decided on getting the requisites on her own responsibility, and paying for them at the end of the quarter when her salary would fall due.

But at the end of the quarter the subject was querulously waived off when Kate alluded to it by Lady Arden.

"To worry my brother about such a trifle would be most thoughtless and unkind, my dear! Why, he is giving away his cheques for thousands just now, and he never likes to be asked for petty sums. When your bills come in he will pay them, and only be sorry they are not larger; but he won't care to be worried for little paltry sums by you."

Lady Arden had a wholesome dread of ever mooting the subject of finance to her brother. She liked to believe that the wealth that seemed to be was, and her faith had been shaken on sundry occasions when she had come upon him in unguarded moments for those trifling sums of ready money which he affected to despise.

She had no intention of misleading Kathleen; but through some mysterious course of reasoning, she had actually come to believe that to disburse a thousand was a much easier task to her brother than to disburse ten pounds. It came about partly perhaps through her only hearing him speak with sparkling glee of the readiness he felt to expend the former on any object or subject under heaven, while she had seen and experienced his gloom and wrath when the latter sum had been suddenly needed.

"But I cannot let General Norreys pay my bills," Kate answered; "it's an

arrangement I cannot permit to be made for me, Lady Arden."

"Very well, my dear; then you had better speak to him yourself," Lady Arden said testily. And when Kathleen, constrained by necessity, followed Lady Arden's advice, she received for answer, that not alone the paltry pounds, but the whole of his fortune was at her service. On her coldly declining to avail herself of the sketchy offer, General Norreys went off into complimentary generalities, and the paltry pounds were not forthcoming. Nor could she without a direct and apparently distrustful appeal, bring the conversation back to them.

"The fact is," Lady Arden said, when Kathleen gave her a half-serious, half-humorous account of her failure, "the General is afraid you should deny yourself anything you might like, dear; if you had your salary he thinks you'd not exceed it. He wants you to do as I do—much the best way, I assure you—have what you like, and send the bills in to him."

But against this course Kathleen's taste and pride revolted. She could not take favours from any man on earth. Her salary was her due; she gave her services—true, they were light—for it, and the receipt of it would have placed her under no obligation. But to have General Norreys making her presents of her bonnets and dresses was a piece of degradation upon which she had not calculated when she went forth into the world to win her own way.

"I am neither his sister nor his slave, Lady Arden," she said. "When I availed myself of his offer to be your companion I gave him no right to supervise my expenditure."

Lady Arden abstaining from making any answer to this, the subject of the salary was dropped.

Kathleen shrank from allowing Barry to know of this annoyance. That he would have freed her from it, or have insisted upon General Norreys freeing her from it at once, she was certain. But she did not want Barry O'Byrne to know that she had aught to complain of in the present about General Norreys, because she anticipated vast assistance in the future from that genial giant when she should be on the track in Italy. She was perfectly aware that Barry would be irate against the thoughtlessness which was the cause of even temporary monetary embarrassment to a woman. "He would

say I ought to leave, and how in the world can I go to Italy if I do?" she thought. So she put the everlasting little bills in her pocket, and as much of her discomfiture as she could with them, and held her peace about the difficulty she experienced in getting her paltry pounds.

The time of their departure was fixed. They were to leave for Italy, for the land of sun and song, and Arthur Blaney's marriage and divorce in a fortnight, and still that something that Kate had sworn to do before she left England remained undone. That something was to look upon the face of the girl who had won the heart of Barry O'Byrne from his early love.

To have gone down to Theynham, and stayed there for a few days in the hope of chance showing her Laura Bray, would have been an easy thing. But chance might not show her Laura Bray, and her resources were not equal to the risk. She had all along resolved that she would not go down in a marginal manner, but that she would wait till the triennial festival should bring every resident in Theynham forth from his or her abode into the public, open places. Now the week of the festival was nearly upon them, and she had not sufficient money in her purse to carry her through the heightened expenses Theynham would indulge in on the occasion.

She saw in the papers that all arrangements for the performance of the oratorios were completed. The German prima donna and the Italian tenor, and the great English contralto, and incomparable Sims Reeves, were each cast for their respective portions. But at the last there was a hitch in the miscellaneous concert management. Pianist number two was seized with neuralgia in her fingers. The evil was not remedied, and her place remained unfilled, to the horror of the local press, up to the very day before the opening of the festival. After reading several paroxysms of anguish, Kate blessed the opportunity and her own rarely cultivated musical talent, and took the train to Theynham to offer herself as a substitute.

She did not tell Lady Arden what she was going to do; she simply said to her excellent hostess that she was going for a few days into the country to see a friend, for she did not care to have Barry informed of her destination, if he should call during her absence. Besides, there

was the possibility of her scheme failing, and with the possibility of her scheme failing she deemed it better to keep silence.

She rested her hopes of seeing Laura on her knowledge—gained from Barry—of the habits of the family at the Friars. She knew that they would be sure to attend both oratorios and concerts, and she guessed that she should be enabled to discover Miss Bray's position in the hall from the board which would be found in the shop of the principal music-seller in the town. Added to this, she knew that at such a festive time every one would be out, and she judged that it would be an easy thing to get a girl who occupied such a prominent position in Theynham society pointed out to her.

She went down to Theynham, and offered her services to fill the terrible vacuum neuralgia had caused. And when she had displayed her talent, her services were accepted, for the simple reason that the professionals who had been applied to at the last refused to come, because they were huffed at not having been applied to at first. She was not exacting about remuneration—merely asking enough to pay her expenses—and she played brilliantly. Therefore she was immediately added to the programme under the name of Madame D'Amant.

Kathleen took up her abode at the Lion, who whisked his tail in perpetual wrath in the most secluded part and at the least fashionable end of the High-street. The mightier sons and daughters of song had monopolized all the accommodation of the Royal, the hotel in front of which the gay world of Theynham promenaded, so the choice of the first-named had been forced upon her. But the fame of her beauty soon spread, and when she went out to walk and look at some of the places Barry had mentioned, she found herself observed, and heard the sound of the murmur of her assumed name constantly.

The whole county appeared to pour itself into its cathedral town in the afternoon. The rattle, and roll, and rumble of equipages was incessant, and the hotels were all full to overflowing. Madame D'Amant gave up the hope, as she met bevy after bevy of fair-faced girls, of selecting Laura Bray from amongst them. Many looked at her with irrepressible eagerness and admiration, and for awhile she thought that each one who did so might be Laura Bray, who, for

aught she knew, might have caught a glimpse of her in Ireland. But too many did it for this supposition to continue long.

The fact was, that though the town was thronged with what the gentlemen of the *Theynham Observer and —shire News* termed “the élite of the rank and beauty of the neighbourhood,” Kathleen's beauty rose superior, and could not pass unnoticed even when so many were fair. There was a nameless something about her air, about the turn of her head, and the carriage of her shoulders, and the way in which she planted her feet, that excited the regard of all the men who met her. There was an equally indescribable something about her dress, about the flow of her skirt (which was longer and wider at the bottom and more gored away at the top than Theynham had yet seen) which won the attention of the women. Garments on which the taste of Elise had been brought to bear were of not too frequent occurrence in that cathedral town; but though they were rare, they were appreciated, and Kathleen, through wearing them, became the cynosure of all the eyes feminine of the place.

She was marked out and spoken of at once as one of the professionals; for, as I said before, the fame of her beauty had got abroad with her name thereunto appended—the assumed name by which she desired to be known in this solemn old city that knew Barry O'Byrne's history so well. She found herself treated with a sort of confidential subservience in the music-seller's shop, when she strayed into it for the purpose of making useless purchases and equally useless inquiries. She attempted to glance in a cursory and indifferent manner over the programme of the seats for the first miscellaneous concert, at which she was to appear as the accompanist to a brilliant solo song. And while she was glancing at it the music-seller came round with the utterly irrelevant information that the “party from the palace was larger than usual this year; but the bishop gave his countenance to the secular as well as the sacred.”

“Isn't there a place called the Friars near here?” Kathleen asked. “It sounds like a monastery. Is it possible there is a monastery extant here still?”

The man smiled in utter scorn of the ignorance which could exist relative to the Friars. County-town tradespeople are sometimes intolerant on this point of

casual visitors being well posted up in their local celebrities.

"The Friars is the seat of Mr. Bray, which, with his family, is so well known here and around by all the leading people that I wonder you haven't heard of them," he said, with a mixture in his manner of deference towards one who played (publicly) the pieces he sold, and pitying contempt towards the stranger to whom the name of Bray was unknown.

Kate seated herself by the counter, and selected a few trifles for purchase, just for the sake of hearing the man talk, as he would be sure to do, she felt, if she only remained passive. She was rewarded presently by his saying in the jaunty tone of half-patronage—

"You're not going to be one of the party at the Friars on the fourth night, then, madame?"

"No," she said; "I'm an alternative, taken, you know, because no one could be found at the last moment. Is there to be a party at the Friars on Friday? These people seem enterprising."

"They were the life and spirit of the place till Miss Bray married," the man replied in a dolorous tone. Truth to tell, the Misses Bray had, in the old Theynham days that Barry O'Byrne often thought of with sadness, given a great impetus to the trade of all the best shops in the place. The garrison came down and spent its filthy lucre freely on songs that it never sang, and gloves that it invariably split, and perfumes and flowers, and all sorts of useless things, on the mere chance of meeting in the circumscribed space of a shop the two fair-faced girls who kept Theynham alive. But when Horatia married, this order of things ceased, for Laura made her solitary state an excuse for making no further exertions to keep Theynham from stagnating. Therefore the music-seller mentioned the circumstance of Miss Bray's marriage with a dolorous face and sad eyes, and Madame D'Amant started at the mention of it as if she had been shot.

For she had only heard of one Miss Bray, and she thrilled through her whole being to the hearing of the sound of Barry O'Byrne's second love being false to him as she, the first, had been.

"Send these things round to the Lion as soon as you can," she said, hastily, scribbling her name on a card and handing it to him. Then she got herself out of the shop as fast as she could, for

her blood seemed to be congealing round her heart at the thought of what might still be, if Barry's pride could cure his slighted love.

She no longer cared to plot and plan for an opportunity of seeing Laura, for Laura, married, was her rival no longer. She raged with impatience that she should have entered into this engagement which would detain her at Theynham, away from Barry O'Byrne, for five days. "How shall I tell him?" she thought, as she made her way hurriedly back to her hotel, careless now of the countless pretty women whom she passed, for Laura married was uninteresting to her. "How shall I tell him? I cannot tell him that I came to Theynham to spy her out because he loved her so, or he'll think me jealous, and holding me securely his own, will never care to woo as I must be wooed before ever I'll be won even by Barry O'Byrne."

The next day passed in a maze with her. She went to a rehearsal and played a brilliant accompaniment to a brilliant air, and played it vilely. But the vocalist whose voice her powers were to display the more fully, was as sweet a natured as she was a toned woman.

"You are put out now about something," she said, kindly; "never mind, it will be all well to-morrow night, I daresay."

Kate resolved that it should be all well, and strove to put her own immediate personal excitement out of court at once.

The evening of her first appearance in public and the hour came. Before the music-seller had given her the information that she erroneously deemed so important, she had calculated the effect her entrance would produce, and had marvelled how the sight of her would affect Laura Bray. "Will she feel that this face was the tie, stronger than his marriage vow, which bound him from her once?" she had thought. But the motive for this thought no longer existed to give piquancy to her preparations. And she dressed herself for the concert with no regard for the effect she might produce on Laura.

But with no carelessness as to the effect she might and surely would produce on others. She was all a woman in this, that she desired to look well on all occasions in the eyes of all men. She had many grave interests at stake in life. She was a dishonoured woman,

wrongfully defrauded of a noble name, and deprived of the wherewithal that would have made the world pleasant to her. She was a disappointed woman, for the man who had borne much for and from her had suddenly ceased to bear with strength, and had shown a flaccid interest in her heart. Yet for all this she could think of the effect she would produce upon Theynham people that night, and could look forward with pleasure to what would be said about her in the Theynham press the following day.

The Blagdens were staying at the Friars, and the old time seemed to have renewed itself in a measure, for Horatia acted the part of four-leaved shamrock to her sister, and by her bright and loving presence brought a portion of the "bloom of happier days" back to Laura's pallid cheek.

It had been a long-arranged plan that the Friars should be filled with staying company during the festival week. But as that week approached the long period of preparation was proved powerless to enable Laura to bear the prospect with resignation, far less satisfaction. She shrank nervously from the thought of meeting all these people who were coming, but more especially did she shrink from a meeting with Horatia here in their old home, where in the pleasant bygone days there had been full and free sisterly confidence between them. Miss Bray had a presentiment that the marital influence had blunted Horatia's natural kindly tact. She looked forward with fractious dread to Mrs. Blagden's blundering on to the track of her (Laura's) altered looks, and the subject of Barry O'Byrne. And she armed her soul in a variety of ways for the conversational conflict that she felt sure would ensue the first time her sister and herself should be alone together.

That the best-tempered armour she could array herself in would be found vulnerable, she felt persuaded. For Horatia had become inoculated by her husband with a sort of steadily amiable, persistent manner, that is specially hard for those on whom it is brought to bear to endure. "And she'll bring it to bear on me at once about him," Laura said to herself; for the subject of that Brighton escapade being naturally uppermost in her own mind at all times, she fell into the mistake of imagining that it occupied the same prominent position in the mind of Mrs. Blagden.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HOW THE RIVALS MET.

BUT when Horatia came she abstained entirely from anything that even the litigious mind of love could torture into the semblance of a depreciatory allusion to Barry O'Byrne or aught concerning him. She blithely took it for granted that Laura had been as anxious and now was as delighted to see her as she was to see Laura. Mrs. Blagden took no notice of the graver face and the graver manner that Laura had dreaded her sister noticing, and had prepared herself to defend.

"I think the arrangements for the week charming; and what do you mean to wear on Friday, Lolly?" she said.

"I don't think it much matters what I wear," Laura began, despairingly; and then feeling that such a tone courted that which she was most desirous of avoiding—her sister's curiosity and commiseration—she added more brightly, "I mean because I shall be at home."

"And also that you look well in anything. I agree with you, Lolly, it doesn't much matter. However, I only asked for this reason: Mr. Blagden has brought you a dress, apparently made of nothing, it's so light and cloudy, so I was rather anxious to discover whether or not you'd set your heart on any *chef d'œuvre* of Mrs. Paulet's."

"Mr. Blagden is very kind," Laura said, half-laughing. "Don't speak, Horatia, but I know why he has troubled himself to do this. And tell him from me how you know that I think it very kind of him, and I'll undertake that he shall feel that I am delighted with the dress."

I think that Laura delighted in accepting this peace-offering from her brother-in-law—delighted in proving to him that she bore him no malice for having put her to the open shame of detection. She knew that he gloried within himself for having been the unconscious instrument of stopping her flight. But she knew that in a like case she would have regretted the light in which the baffled one would regard the impediment. Therefore, she was delighted with the opportunity of proving to him that she had forgiven him to the extent of accepting a costly favour from him.

Now this is no light thing. It shows a much more chastened spirit to accept from, than to give to, your enemy. Therefore, it must be conceded that Laura had

obtained a great victory over herself when she accepted from the hands of Mr. Blagden a white *tulle* illusion dress, value twenty-five guineas.

And she was rewarded. The wifely pride of Horatia was so soothed and gratified by this mute acknowledgment of the rectitude and general praiseworthiness of her husband's proceedings that night at Brighton, that she utterly abstained from either fishing for information about, or giving advice relative to, Barry O'Byrne. She behaved to Laura as if that young lady had not a weight of woe on her heart, and this mode of treatment agreed with Laura better than any other could have done.

The party from the Friars occupied a prominent position in the front row on the night of the first concert. The two sisters chanced to be seated together, and as they were separated from the rest of the ladies of their party by two or three men on either side, the well-known belles of Theynham were sufficiently remarkable.

By and by the stately singer of sweet mellow strains was led forward by the conductor, and the audience welcomed her with that cordial, heart-felt enthusiasm her presence always inspires. And behind her came, unsupported—for it was no one's place to lead her forward—the amateur who had been suddenly found to fill the place of the neuralgia-afflicted professional.

It requires but little nerve to enable a woman to enter a crowded room gracefully and with the most perfect self-possession. She is on the level; and even should—which is not at all probable—every face in the room be turned towards her simultaneously, there is nothing overpowering in it, for her mere passage through them breaks the keen observance of their glances.

But on the boards it is different. If you come from behind, you appear to be walking straight down upon a wall of human faces of which you are the focus. You feel that you are cruelly clearly outlined, and that an error in the adjustment of the box-plaits of your dress is discernible to the eyes of all your feminine observers. The only thing which can break the agonizing spell of the intense interest with which the whole house appears to be regarding you is some act of your own—your voice if you are a singer or actress; your manipulation of the keys if you are a pianiste. It is easy enough, after a brief experience,

to advance and strike a natural attitude. But it is a horribly difficult task for a beginner. We are very apt to say of some of our most finished actresses that they have the good taste to move as if they were in a private drawing-room. We say this as if we imagined that this result was attained by their merely avoiding exaggeration of movement and suffering themselves to behave as they would at home. Whereas, in reality this quiet, natural ease, which may very likely be theirs off the boards, is on the same as difficult to do, as much the result of hard study and severe practice, as are the life-like, commonplace conversations and the every-day realisms which impart such a marvellous charm to the magic pages of Anthony Trollope.

Kathleen was neither a shy nor an awkward woman, but to herself she seemed these things as she came forward through the music-stands and stools under the brilliant glare in the wake of the great contralto. She had deemed it an easier thing than it was, this walking down a slope with a hand-clapping, cheering multitude in front, who all seemed to be looking at her. For a moment, the light and the noise, and the sense of being up in so conspicuous a place, confounded her, and she paused suddenly and bent her head in the irresistible desire to avoid the scene—paused and bent her head, and so commanded by her grace of attitude and action that attention which she had shrunk from and striven to escape.

She was a rarely beautiful woman; with the most wondrous mobility she combined the most perfectly pure of outlines. Her silky dark hair has been spoken of before, and so have her unfathomable eyes, and the way she managed both has also been alluded to in a former page.

On this night of her "first appearance in public" she had excelled herself in the art which she had displayed in her toilette. The jewels which had been hers as Countess of Kilcorrau she had given back to the family that scoffed at her claim to the title. But never as the Countess of Kilcorran had she brought more consummate taste to bear upon her adornment than she had lavished on herself this night.

She had put on a blue moire—a colour that Barry O'Byrne had liked to see her wear in the old days of their early passion, when she would have worn sackcloth and ashes if he had thought them an advisable

costume—and over this she had thrown a Spanish mantilla of *point d'Alençon*, and as she paused and bent her head lower and lower still, the young buds of a spray of white roses that she had placed on the wavy fulness of her dark silken hair became distinctly visible to the audience.

Her embarrassment was uncontrollable, but it was also momentary. Before many had time to mark it she had raised her head again, and the beauty of her face was irradiated with a flush that few would have had the acumen to construe into intense and agonizing nervousness. As she now, apparently perfectly mistress of the situation, advanced to the piano and prepared to seat herself, a dull hum of admiration (that was not legitimate, for she had not struck a note yet) arose, and Laura Bray whispered to her sister—

"Horatia, what a woman! what a lovely woman! Did you see how she faltered as she came on?"

"I saw that she bowed in acknowledgement of applause that was not intended for her."

"She did not," Laura replied, almost fiercely; "she was well-nigh paralysed, the lovely creature, by the sudden glare and publicity. She's not one to appropriate honours that are not intended for her, I'm sure. And ah! how she plays!"

This last was a rhapsodical exclamation that had not a firm basis of truth. The substitute—the beautiful Madame D'Amant—had only struck a few chords when Laura gave vent to it, and these few chords were utterly disregarded by the majority in the interest awakened by the few promissory notes of the great contralto in the first bar of the air.

The song ended, and the mellow-voiced woman, whose genial, happy face is known, and loved, and welcomed all over the country, was bowing her acknowledgments for the plaudits of the crowd. Once more the popular favourite was obscuring utterly the claims to consideration of her who had caused the instrument so sympathetically to support that sympathetic voice that can endow the simplest ballad with the rarest charm. Kathleen had risen, but she still stood facing the piano, slightly turned away from the audience, when a fuller cheer compelled her to look up.

A lady had risen in the front row, and was leaning and looking towards her—the amateur pianiste—with anxious eyes. As Kathleen turned and looked, the lady

flung her a bouquet, and then clapped her own little hands enthusiastically, and the whole hall followed the example of Laura Bray.

The bouquet was handed to Kathleen by the conductor of the orchestra, who then led her forward to bow her thanks to all, but specially to that fair-haired, blue-eyed girl who had given her the first recognition—the first encouragement. So it was thus, after all, that the rivals in the heart of Barry O'Byrne looked their first upon each other.

Another old institution was revived on the following morning. A gay cavalcade of horsemen and women went forth from the Friars, through the streets of Theynham, and Theynham came out of its doors, as of old, to see who rode by the bridle-rein of Miss Laura Bray.

The happy young matron, who adored her commonplace and slightly wearisome husband, through God's special grace, had organized this scheme the previous night at the concert.

"Ask Mr. Vyvyan, dear," she had said to her husband during one of those awful pauses in the concert that will never cease to be regarded as awful, however necessary they may be; "ask Mr. Vyvyan if he would not like to go for a ride to-morrow morning, with Laura and you and me? Tell him he may bring as many as he likes, provided they're all well mounted."

Vyvyan, and many "of his," had been very glad to accept the invitation, and had come down to the Friars at an early enough hour to insure a good long ride before luncheon. These large riding parties, once of such frequent occurrence, had ceased to be from the date of Barry O'Byrne's marriage. In the old days it had always been Barry who had ridden at Laura Bray's bridle-rein, and she had not cared to mark the difference—all the sad, woful difference—that existed, further than was necessary to her own heart.

"Lolly looks herself again," Gerald Bray said to Mrs. Blagden, when they had got clear of the town and were well on the road to Greystoke—a road somebody had proposed in unconsciousness, and to which Laura had instantly agreed.

"Isn't she usually like this, then?" Horatia asked.

"No: but probably she only wanted rousing: it's dull for her alone, I suppose."

"Her stay at Brighton didn't do her any good either," Mrs. Blagden replied;

and she saw by the gloom that overspread her brother's brow as she spoke that he had his suspicions as to the cause of the inutility of the sea-air on that occasion with regard to Laura's health.

"Do you ever by any chance hear of Barry now, Gerald?" she asked presently. And he answered—

"I had a letter from him once; I didn't answer it; I didn't read it, in fact. I only hope to God he'll never cross my path; if he does he shall answer to me for some portion of his conduct."

"Gerald, it will kill Laura if you carry out your threat; and oh! you foolish boy, why didn't you read his letter? I think better of him now you tell me that he has written; but you should have told Laura—you should have answered it—you should, Gerald, indeed, indeed."

"Why the devil should I, pray?" the impetuous young brother replied; "don't go hoisting him up into the position of a hero again, please, Horatia. You all helped to make an ass of Barry O'Byrne while he was here, and he's repaid your kindness by causing Laura to make a goose of herself about him. I acknowledge that he's a very attractive fellow, but, confound him, that's no excuse for his having sent Laura into a fever at Brighton, and then having left her to get out of it as she best could."

"Ah! there was so much to explain, and perhaps that letter you didn't read explained it all," Horatia replied, with a vexed air. "It is so like a man to be circumspect in the wrong place."

"It's uncommonly like a woman to blame a man for doing anything that doesn't happen to step with her wishes. By Jove! now, that's plucky of Laura," he continued, abruptly, pointing out Miss Bray, who had reined up for the purpose of indicating the beauties of the view to be gained over the Greystoke park gates apparently.

"She's speaking to some one; she never would have pulled up there for nothing, because that would be mere bravado, and entirely unlike Laura," Mrs. Blagden replied.

As the married sister and her brother rode up, Mrs. Blagden's judgment was found correct, for Laura was speaking to a lady in a black silk dress and mantle, with a pale mauve bonnet, encircled with white roses, on her head—a lady attired in one of those very toilettes, in fact, for which General Norreys was willing and anxious to pay.

Kathleen had wearied of the interior of the respectable and venerable Lion, for she was alone and very dull. Up at the other hotel, where the great musical stars had located themselves, perpetual animation reigned, and the time passed pleasantly enough in partaking of oysters and excellent draught porter in the prima donna's sitting-room. But no one thought of asking Kathleen to share, as she would have been very glad to do, in a similar refection down at the Lion. For the satellites alone congregated there, and they rather steered clear of Madame D'Amant as a not too well-authenticated amateur, who might, if too much encouragement was lavished upon her, cut into the profession, to the detriment of some special friend of their own in a chrysalis state at the Academy.

So she had gone out for a walk with no other motive than to get out of streets which at this festival time presented to her view an imitation of the more crowded West-end thoroughfares only. But after walking along a high road for some distance, she became fraught with a purpose, which was to go and look at Greystoke.

The lodge-keeper let her into the park, and she wandered for a while round about the house where Barry O'Byrne had lived as the husband of another woman. Then she came out into the road again, and as she was just pausing to thank the gate-keeper for having allowed her to pass, she saw a party of equestrians coming up, and with a smile and a bow, she recognised the pretty, frank-faced girl who had led the plaudits that were bestowed upon her the previous night.

Laura Bray pulled up at once, and bent forward to speak to the proud, beautiful woman, whose agitation and nervousness she and she alone had divined.

"I am very happy indeed," Miss Bray began, "to have this opportunity of speaking that which I have already written and sent to the Lion (I think you are staying there?) an invitation for to-night."

Kathleen could only smile, and look politely interested, for Laura's horse began to fidget so at this juncture that his rider had to leave her sentence incomplete in order to quiet him.

"Steady, St. Kevin!" she said, soothingly; "stand still, sir; good old horse, stand still."

And then she brought him close to Kathleen, who had heard his Irish designation with a spasm—a presentiment of what was to follow—and said—

"I must introduce myself, Madame D'Amant—I am Miss Bray. Attribute my lack of ceremony to my lack of time, and show that you are willing to forgive it, by promising to come to the Friars to-night."

Kathleen felt as if the ground were surging away from beneath her, as the truth was made apparent that this girl whom she found charming was the same one who had swayed Barry from his early allegiance—and was Miss Bray still. But she gave no sign of the feelings that rolled over her soul—those waves of sorrow were all internal. The flush that would mount to her cheek might have been of pleasure only at this politeness, for it was a delicate flush, not a pained one.

"Probably many of our guests of to-night are known to you already," Laura said, and then she ran over a few of their names; and Kathleen told her "no, she was a stranger to the profession—a stranger in England she might say."

"A Frenchwoman?" Laura asked, for Kathleen infused a suspicion of an accent into her reply.

"How I shall lose in your estimation when I tell you that I am only an Irish-woman," Kathleen answered. And now it was Laura's turn to flush, and she did it vividly.

"Let me introduce you to my sister, Mrs. Blagden, my brother, Mr. Gerald Bray," she said, hurriedly. "I regard you now as pledged to us for to-night," and then she leant forward and extended her hand, and Kathleen took it and attempted to press it with a corresponding warmth to that with which it was offered.

The brilliant-looking beautiful woman looked sadly after the cavalcade as it passed along, before she turned to retrace her steps to Theynham. "Would she do as I have done—greet her kindly, if she knew that Barry's heart had been mine?" she thought. "I'll see if she be worthy of him to-night."

CHAPTER XXXV.

MISS THYNNE'S ARRANGEMENTS.

MISS THYNNE had, as has been shown, always felt a certain generous interest in her uncle's young widow, and this interest had redoubled itself after that visit to Richmond which the aforesaid young widow had paid in company with Barry O'Byrne.

"He evidently takes nothing more than a warm friendly interest in the establishment of her rights, mamma," she said to Lady Gertrude. And Lady Gertrude threw her head up a few degrees higher, and replied—

"Warm friendship! Nonsense! There was more truth in that bog-trotting exploit than your poor uncle cared to believe. I wash my hands of her altogether."

"You haven't soiled them about her as yet, mamma," Miss Thynne replied, carelessly. She saw, however, that her parent would not be likely to give her cordial co-operation, therefore she refrained from enlightening Lady Gertrude on a scheme she had formed—which was to get herself established for a time at Drumleyne, with permission to search where she pleased for the missing documents which would give back honour to Kathleen Daly.

It was not all pure womanly chivalry on behalf of a sister in disgrace which dictated this course. Miss Thynne was past her earliest bloom, but she had not reached that callous stage when a woman with a heart unoccupied can behold an unfettered man of an attractive exterior with indifference. She, in common with the rest of the world, had heard those stories, which were freely circulated at the time of the trial, relating to the long existent loves and passionate devotion to each other, of Kathleen and Barry. But now these stories lacked credibility to her mind; "for there is no impediment to their gratifying them if they were so inclined," she said to herself. Almost unconsciously she began to entertain the idea of the possibility of Barry's heart inclining to another through gratitude.

"For he would be very grateful to anyone who aided in the restoration of the woman who is dear to him as a sister," she thought. As she thought this she became very anxious for that establishment at Drumleyne which should forward her views.

The new Earl of Kilcorran was an amiable man, willing to do anyone a service; but he was unmarried, therefore conventionality forbade that he should do Miss Thynne the special service she required of him—viz., give her an invitation to his mansion of Drumleyne.

"I wont go there with mamma," she soliloquized, when she received his prudent rejoinder; "he must get one of his

aunts, if he has such a thing, or some young married cousin, to stay in his house, and then ask me there to relieve her solitude."

So she wrote him a long letter putting it to him delicately that she was yearning for a sight of the soil that had been her forbears'; pining for a brief residence in the land that had known the Blaneys in the days of old, when Ireland was for the Irish, ere the hand of the stranger had pressed the iron home to the soul of the Celt. "Could he not sympathize with that desire," she asked, "which was now reigning in her bosom, and prompting her to search everywhere for aught that should bear upon the annals of her race—her maternal race, of which she was prouder," she told him, "than of her father's name? And where shall I find such full and complete annals," she went on, "as in the hearts of those whose forefathers were about the place that has known our forefathers for centuries? The fact is, I want to compile a history of the Kilcorrans, that shall make up in loving carefulness of detail whatever it may lack in literary skill."

In short, she pandered to his weakest points—his family pride and love of antiquarian research—and in the end she gained what she sought.

But not without the singleness of her declared purpose being suspected. The earl was amiable—he was also suspicious.

"If Miss Thynne thinks that by coming here and interesting herself in my pet pursuits she'll induce me to marry her," he said to himself, "she's very much mistaken. She has set about it shrewdly enough, but she'll find that she has a shrewd man to deal with—she'll never catch me."

("Ah! the good saint little knew
What that wily sex can do.")

In time he took the path she had gently indicated that it would be well for him to pursue. That is to say, in default of an aunt or a young married cousin, he secured the presence in his house of a matron sister, who had made a love match twenty years before in a moment of romantic passion, and had repented of the same in woful poverty ever since. Lack of means and a large family had robbed her of the pride of her race in a great measure. Therefore when her brother the earl told her, in terms that were not the most gracious in the world, that she "might come and stay at Drumleyne with her

children, provided her extravagant worthless husband never darkened the door," she turned a deaf ear to the epithets bestowed upon the man whom she had once adored—and came.

Originally Mrs. Lloyd had been possessed of an average share of spirit and an average sense of a wife's duty. But poverty and privation had ground the former out of her, and the latter had declined under the sense of feeling that it was by reason of her marriage that this hard portion was hers. Her whole matrimonial career had been one of petty difficulties and small heart-wearing annoyances. And though she never gave her husband wordy reproaches for these things, she let him perceive that she felt herself to be fully justified in avoiding them, and leaving him to his own devices whenever she had the chance of so doing. As a rule he abstained from interfering with the liberty of the subject in the person of his wife. But the arrival of the invitation from the earl developed his long dormant conjugal and paternal feelings suddenly.

"I cannot consent to be separated from my wife and children in that way, Gussie," he said; "I can't consent to your going to Drumleyne without the protection of a husband. You'd better write and tell your brother so, and then if he really wants you he will have the good taste, perhaps, to improve the curiously insolent tone of his invitation."

"Jack knows very well that I'm oftener without your protection than with it," Mrs. Lloyd answered, sulkily; "he'll see through the selfishness of your suddenly affected interest for me; he'll know that it's only because you don't like the idea of our enjoying ourselves without you, that you talk such nonsense about not liking me to be at Drumleyne without the protection of a husband."

"Well, I confess the idea isn't too pleasant," Mr. Lloyd, who made no pretensions to magnanimity, replied, coolly; "at all events, write to Kilcorran and tell him what I say; and if he has any of the feelings of a gentleman—a thing, by-the-bye, that one can hardly expect from any member of your family—he'll ask me."

Mrs. Lloyd seethed in silent wrath against the man she had sworn to love and obey; but she wrote the letter. As she said to her eldest daughter, it was hard to be compelled so to humiliate herself, as to court a reprimand from her brother, for the sake and at the bidding

of her husband, who despised her whole family.

Mr. Lloyd was wont to express his contempt for all the race of Blaneys with a candour that was most refreshing to those not immediately concerned. But to his wife his ebullitions of sentiment respecting them were far from pleasant, especially when, as now, he might be the means of depriving her of that which she rarely knew now—a period of perfect peace.

She wrote the letter, and then set herself to work on the few poor preparations it was in her power to make for the visit, if it should be permitted to come off. She reorganized dresses and re-trimmed bonnets, and got a little further credit from the wearied-out tradespeople, by talking about her approaching visit to her brother the Earl of Kilcorran. And when she had done these things, the answer came from Drumleyne, and she was informed, in language of but scant courtesy, that if she would not come without her husband she might remain away.

Nineteen years ago she would have burnt the letter and have sedulously kept its contents from her husband's knowledge; and in wrath at the slight that was offered to him, she would have joined in his animadversions on her whole race, and kneeling at his feet, would have made him feel that to her he was a hero, the more adorable through being misunderstood by others. But now she told herself that her brother was quite right—that he judged Mr. Lloyd very properly, and that her duty to herself and her children rendered it imperative that she should go to Drumleyne.

So after an amount of recrimination that would have seemed too hideous to live through when she first became his wife, Mrs. Lloyd conveyed herself and daughters to the comfortable home her brother offered them on such degrading terms.

"You'll have a little peace now, Augusta," the earl said when he had kissed her.

"And," he continued, kissing his nieces, "if you don't make a fool of yourself about that worthless fellow, you can make this your home."

Mrs. Lloyd, who did not deem her husband at all worthless, shook her head and smiled in a sycophantic manner, and told her mighty relative that she had suffered too much to be

foolish any more; and that her warmest gratitude was his for his noble conduct to her.

It dawned upon her in a few days that his conduct was not so fraternally disinterested as she had at first believed. Miss Thynne arrived, looking handsomer and haughtier than was pleasing to the worn-out mother of five daughters, who were utterly dependent on the favour and bounty of a man who seemed to think that Miss Thynne was those things that I have called her. Mrs. Lloyd was not told so in so many words, but it struck her as being very apparent that she had simply been secured as a chaperone for the guest, who came and made herself quite at home in the house, and seemed to regard Mrs. Lloyd merely as a necessary evil.

Miss Thynne did not go to Drumleyne fraught with the ideas attributed to her by the earl; but he encased himself in such visible armour that she soon became conscious that he feared an attack. And the knowledge that this excellent *parti* felt himself to be exposed to a certain danger, was pleasing to the mind of a woman who had run the gauntlet of twelve seasons, and still remained in "maiden meditation, fancy free."

She wrote a terse, brief note to Barry O'Byrne:—"I am here," she said, "prosecuting silently] but untiringly the search for that which I am persuaded did exist, and pray may exist still. If you should be at O'Byrne Castle, you might call upon me, and suggest other secret hiding-places than I have thought of yet."

This credit must be awarded her, that she was as indefatigable in practice as she was in theory. In her pretended desire to find anything that might bear upon the history of by-gone Blaneys, she devoted days to the taking down of books from the library shelves. And these she held by the binding, while she attempted to shake out what might possibly be between their leaves—that document which should win for the finder of it the gratitude of Barry O'Byrne.

It was a laborious task, but she had not many interests in life, and her genuine one for Kathleen, and this factitious one for the handsome young widower, amused her and occupied her time. She got so absorbed in her self-imposed task, that the earl was fain to confess to himself that her declared had been her real purpose, and that she had only come to

Drumleyne to forward her literary views. And as soon as he was inwardly assured of this, he cost his sister anguish by spending many hours of every day in the huge old library with Miss Thynne, shaking out the leaves of books, and "looking for any stray MS. that may tend to increase our knowledge of what we were in olden times," she said artfully.

"But we can't expect to find any notes on slips that will tend to that end in such a volume as this, for instance," the earl said to her one day, touching as he spoke a volume of Boccacio's "Decamerone."

"An early edition—a veritable fourteenth century edition," she said, taking it from him; and the bibliomania that is inherent in most of us made her forget her cause for a moment in her newborn interest in the rare old book.

"Arthur Blayney, Empoli, 1829," she read, opening it at the fly-leaf, "that was the year of his marriage," she went on thoughtfully; "perhaps he read these very pages to his bride."

The earl laughed.

"A piquant literary refection to offer her," he said; "but liquid Italian from the lips of love can be listened to, when the same matters in our harsher mother-tongue would be rightly enough cavilled at."

"I wish I could read it with understanding," the lady went on, regardless of the earl's more than half-implied censure. "I can pronounce the words well enough, for I've been taught to sing, but I was never taught their meaning. Read me a passage or two, and as you read translate literally."

She tossed the book to him as she spoke, and he failing to catch it, it fell on the floor with all its leaves outspread. As he picked it up, a yellow old letter fluttered forth, and Miss Thynne, with a cry of delight, sprang from her seat on the summit of the library-steps, and picked it up.

"What have you there?" the earl asked; "a love-letter from your uncle to the wife he abolished so soon—poor woman?"

"A love-letter—but not to that wife," Miss Thynne replied, eagerly turning to the signature at the end of the time-stained effusion which had outlived the heart and hand which had dictated and penned the words. "The letter is to a lover evidently," Miss Thynne murmured as she hastily read over a few lines, "and

it is signed by Agnes Blaney, but it is not addressed to my uncle."

The proud blood of a race that could not brook dishonour rose to her brow, as she read the cold, unimpassioned allusions to their mutual guilt, which a false calculating wife addressed to some man who was apparently her husband's friend. It was almost diabolical in its cautious self-restraint, and prudent counsels how to act, so that "nothing might by any possibility be discovered." There was none of the utter self-abandonment of a passion which, however reprehensible, was at least genuine and warm. It was selfish, interested, hard, and full of a paltry prudence that made it seem a meaner, baser, more shameful thing than it would otherwise have been.

"What a letter!" Miss Thynne said, drawing a long breath as she finished it; and then she looked at it more closely, and found traced in pencil these nearly obliterated words in her uncle's handwriting—

"To my friend of years—from my wife of three months." Then, lower down, was added in ink and caligraphy of a later date, "My curse and my care—which I have learnt now to value more than gold—yea, than much fine gold."

"I think my uncle would rather have put a pistol to his head and fired it, than that any man should see this letter," Miss Thynne said, after reading those words. "It's a shameful letter—a letter that makes me rage against the folly which has placed the woman who wrote it in an honoured grave. The sight of it is odious to me, and I had rather you did not read it. Still you have the right to see it if you will to do so."

"It may be that I ought to see it," the earl said, extending his hand for the letter. And then Miss Thynne gave it to him with a burning brow, and left him alone to its perusal.

He watched her as she swept away out of the room, and even when the door closed and hid her from his view he still gazed after her for a minute or two. Then he came back to the perusal of the letter with the ejaculation—

"Gad! doesn't she feel for the honour of the house?"

Miss Thynne had not found that which she had come to Drumleyne to seek. But she had found the way through the layers of prudence, suspicion, and self-

ishness into the Earl of Kilcorran's heart.

He described the incident of the finding of the letter to his sister Mrs. Lloyd, and enlarged in admiring terms upon Miss Thynne's consequent emotion.

"Yes," Mrs. Lloyd said, when he had concluded what was too much of a panegyric on Miss Thynne to be pleasant to the sisterly ears,—"yes, she's a capital actress; it's a pity she didn't know that she would never marry, she might then have taken to the stage as a profession—she's too old now."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A FALSE START.

WHEN the highest dignitary of the church in a cathedral town exhibits a Christian and cultivated appreciation of the prima donna the whole city is sure to follow so safe a lead, and heap social honours on the heads of the whole company of singers.

There was a brilliant assemblage at the Friars that night, and Laura had to come completely out of the shadow of the sorrow that she could not kill and bury in order that there might be no incongruity between herself and the scene. Miss Bray looked radiant as of old in the white *tulle illusion* dress, that resembled a series of billows confined together by strings of small overblown blush-roses and fern leaves.

They had gloriously proportioned rooms at the Friars, and a constant relay of ices and the most delicate of French confectionery, and plenty of handsome men capable of waltzing for twenty minutes "double time" without showing signs of being punished by the pace. And these things constitute the principal elements essential to the success of a ball.

Laura felt fascinated by the beautiful Irishwoman with the French name who had come like a star amongst them, none knew from where. She felt fascinated and interested by her, and uncomfortable in her presence at the same time. Kathleen watched her perpetually, yet unwillingly, as it were, till Laura began to feel the ceaseless observance that was withdrawn from her the moment she faced it, and to feel it with annoyance.

Miss Bray perceived that the adulation

which was freely lavished upon Madame D'Amant was powerless to distract her attention or amuse her even, when she (Laura) removed herself from the immediate vicinity of the attractive stranger. Kathleen was keenly regarding this girl, by whom Barry O'Byrne had been won, in order to detect, if possible, if there lived in eye, tone, or gesture, when she addressed or was addressed by some other man, aught that conventionality did not demand.

And she—sharpened as her vision was—saw nothing. The girl went through her duties as daughter of the house gracefully and well, but the "touch of a vanished hand," and the sound that she never heard now of a voice to the memory of which her heart thrilled, passed her safely through the fiery ordeal of Kathleen's watchfulness.

"Do you sing at all?" Laura asked of Kathleen, as the two met near the region of the piano at which Madame D'Amant had just been presiding as accompanist to the "Shadow Dance" song, which the soprano had been carolling forth with a twenty thousand nightingale power.

"I sing Irish melodies—things that are unknown and uncared for," Kate replied. Then Laura's tongue refused for a few moments to speed her purpose and plead for a hearing of the songs of his land.

"And very sweetly and simply they would come in and strike the ear after what we have but now listened to," the old bishop said, patronizingly. As he spoke he offered his arm to the Queen of Song, in order that she might feel that he merely desired to encourage modest worth, and was careless about listening to its vocal efforts.

They are very sweet, those melodies! wild and sweet and sad, and most voluptuously tender. The one Kathleen selected when they pressed round her and almost forced the choice of one upon her, was not one that usually falls from the lips of a woman. It is not one that embodies a woman's sentiments, still she gave it forth with such an intensity of fervour and sympathy that it imparted a corresponding thrill to the souls of some of her audience.

She rang out with what almost seemed to Laura a defiant air, the brilliant plaints in which Moore has asserted the undying influence over the heart of man of "Love's young dream." She seemed to

throw her whole soul into the statement, that—

“New hopes may bloom
And days may come
Of milder, calmer beam ;
But there's nothing half so sweet in life
As Love's young dream.”

She seemed to throw her whole soul into the statement, and to revel in the enunciation of the fact, as women will do when they delude themselves into the belief that they have been the first-loved.

Kathleen rose when the last notes of her song died away in the almost vociferous burst of applause their sweetness had won—rose and turned round with the beauty of her face illumined by a glow of triumph. The recollection of how she had been Barry's earliest idol was upon her at the moment, and she rather overrated the importance of that fact in the enthusiasm created by the sound of the melody.

Many had pressed forward to look at the utterer of those sweet notes. “Who is it?” was asked on all sides, and but few could reply satisfactorily.

“She's no one of importance—a perfectly unknown *artiste*?” a lady said, inquiringly, as Kathleen was taking her departure.

Laura Bray was looking after the Irishwoman with a wistful, absent gaze, when a celebrated singer—a small lion who had not an opportunity of giving ever so small a roar before, said apologetically—

“It is possible that I can answer that question better even than Miss Bray.”

“Yes—do you know her?” Laura asked, wearily. “I only saw her at the concert; I thought her lovely, so I asked her to come here to-night. Have you ever met her before?”

“Nearly two years ago I saw her in Paris at the opera, where she was known as the Countess of Kilcorran,” he said. “I did not recognise her again till she turned round from the piano after her song.”

He was more occupied in giving his information than in watching to see how it was received. It was a staggering blow to Miss Bray to find that the enemy had penetrated into the heart of her camp, and had there unsuspectedly gauged some of her weaknesses. But even in her first moments of excitement and annoyance she had this balm—

“He must have spoken of me—he must

have let her know that he loves me,” she thought, “or Kate Daly would never have masqueraded for the sake of seeing me. I'll go to her to-morrow—I may hear of him.”

But when Miss Bray went to the Lion on the following morning, she heard that Madame D'Amant had gone back to London by an early train.

Kathleen went back to Cintra Lodge, and found that the preparations for the journey to Italy were nearly completed. Barry, though he felt annoyed and hurt, was powerless to hinder Kathleen's departure for that little town near Florence, in which she fervently hoped to clear up her fate, under the auspices of the military giant whom Mr. O'Byrne distrusted in the not altogether unreasonable way men are apt to distrust generals whose names are not to be found in any Army-List under heaven, and whose decorations and diamond-hilted swords are perpetually at their banker's.

The day of their departure dawned, and as General Norreys was going to travel *en grand seigneur*, the house in Palace-gardens resembled chaos when Barry went there for the last time to take leave of Kathleen. There was a travelling-chariot at the door, and servants were surging through the latter in various stages of bewilderment and semi-completion for the start. The two ladies stood ready cloaked in the drawing-room, gathering up a few of the trifles women always stake their peace of mind on taking away with them, and grow utterly regardless of and lose before the first stage of their journey is over.

The general stood in the hall, full to overflowing as usual with *bonhomie*, and fortifying himself and everybody who passed through with Hungarian wine of a choice vintage that had only come in the day before, and that General Norreys had his own reason for doubting he might ever taste, if he went away to Italy without doing so.

“Wish me success, Barry dear,” Kathleen said to Barry, as he stood by her side looking down at her with much of the old kindness in his eyes, but with none of the old love; “wish me success at Empoli,” she went on, and all her excitement, her passionate desire to be then on the track, blazed forth as she spoke. “I have lived, from the moment I knew I was going,” she added, in a deep voice; “the knowledge gave me new blood—new nerve—a new heart: it has enabled me to do so

much, and now I feel that every moment we delay between this and that Church of St. Mark will be an hour of agony to me."

"I do wish you success, Kathleen—God knows I do, heartily!"

"And by-and-by, when I've attained it, you must come to Italy and see me," she said, in a low tone; "will you, Barry?"

"Will I?" he repeated, reproachfully; "don't attempt to question my willingness to do whatever may be pleasing to you."

"Then you will come to see me, and you'll bring your wife—don't shake your head, Barry; Laura Bray will be your wife, I'm sure, if only you'll be wise, and not leave the seeking of her till too late, for her heart is all yours now."

"How do you know it, Kate?" he asked, eagerly. "Ah! you don't know it—you don't know how I tested her, and she—"

"Hush! Never tell it, Barry; it's her secret as well as yours, remember. No, I don't know all, or how you may have 'tested her,' but you have done it with tolerable severity, I have no doubt. But this I do know, that she's been tested pretty well by others, and that she is true as steel to you still. Give her this when you see her (it was the emerald shamrock which Kathleen had worn rather conspicuously at the party at the Friars), "and give her my love, and tell her from me that she's free to tell you how I know that she's true to you still; she would never speak without that permission, I'm thinking."

"Wont you tell me?" he asked.

"No, I wont," she said, lightly. "I can't be the one to make confession of having done another romantic thing for your sake, Barry. Here comes the general," she continued, as Barry handed her into the carriage. "Good-bye, Barry; may we both have won what we want before we meet again."

But fate ordained that they were not to part just yet.

The heir to the Duchy of Lancaster came out through his doorway, a step or two forward on his good-natured road to Kate's goal—only a step or two, only down into his garden, when he paused to shake hands with Barry.

Before the latter had time to wish him *bon voyage*, the military colossus was tapped on the shoulder, and the projected tour to Italy was quashed utterly. For George Plantagenet Norreys was in the

clutches of those who are strong as death, and as cruel as the grave—a brace of beings omnipotent through the law, yclept bailiffs.

Kathleen was a brave-hearted woman! but that same heart had been so firmly set on this journey, which was now thus cruelly put an end to, she could get up no falsely romantic sympathy for the man who had striven to involve her in his downfall. She could feel nothing but the direst distress at the worthless means she would gladly have used towards the end she desired to gain being taken from her. She was a brave-hearted woman! but she was all a woman now in her bursts of passionate weeping over the inevitable.

It may be as well to have done with the whilom tenant of Cintra Lodge at once, as with the cessation of his having even the appearance of being able to assist Kathleen his connexion with my story ceases. His debts were as gigantic as his person and his facility for romancing. He attributed his difficulties on his examination "to the non-appreciation of his merits on the part of the authorities at the War Office, who declined to give him employment in the English service, and denied him the right to unsheathe his sword in the cause of his cousin the queen. They were also due, in a measure," he added, "to the disorganized state of Europe generally."

But this explanation appearing insufficient, he was robbed of that which, according to his own account, he would freely shed his blood to gain for any or every oppressed nation under the sun—liberty, and condemned to Whitecross, till his creditors grew tired of detaining him, or he could offer some more valid reasons for his difficulties. For a week or two Kathleen thought him grossly ill-used, and unjustly treated. But afterwards, viewing him in the light his creditors' counsel threw upon his life, she altered her opinion, and thanked Providence that it had interfered before she got linked with him in such a way as might have been difficult to sever.

She was a brave-hearted woman; and though the downfall of the plan that had seemed so fair shook her soul with disappointment, she would still neither give up her scheme nor accept aid in carrying it out. She gave herself no time for useless lamentation, but proceeded at once to cast about for the means of accomplishing her purpose. Finally, she succeeded in engaging herself as com-

panion to the daughters of an artistic-minded mother, who having failed to imbue her offspring with her own sentiments in the land of their birth, was bent upon taking them to Florence.

The lady was rash, for she made no inquiries and asked for no credentials. She took Kathleen's story that "she was bent upon going to the neighbourhood of Florence because friends, of whom she had entirely lost sight, were last heard of in that locality," she took this story as it was offered to her, without interest and without comment.

"She is just the kind of person I wanted to be with," Kathleen said to Barry, when he was once more bidding her farewell; "she regards me as a mere machine for imparting what she calls a fine taste to her daughters; pleased as she is with my playing and painting, she sinks my humanity, and asks no questions about my antecedents. She's the most delightful, heartless woman I ever met with, and as such she's specially congenial to me now."

The start was a fair one this time, for the disorganized state of Europe had no effect whatever on the artistic-minded lady's movements. And Barry O'Byrne tried not to feel that he was glad that it was so.

But for all his efforts Kathleen's absence was a relief to him. She had been very generous in her abnegation of him he felt, but he attributed this abnegation to a wrong motive. He thought that she released him, and made him over to Laura because she would not link herself with him while there was a cloud on her fame, and because she had nobility of nature enough to desire to spare Laura the pangs of unrequited love. But Kate's motive for releasing him was less exalted and far more natural. Had she deemed that Barry loved her best still, fifty thousand Laura Brays might have worn and wept themselves into the grave for love of him ere Kathleen would have given him up. But she could not deem that he loved her best, and so her pride came to her aid, for she could not take his hand when the knowledge was hers that she did not reign supreme in his heart.

Now that Kathleen was gone, it did appear a very unkind thing that Laura made no sign. He recalled those hours of waiting at the little country inn near Brighton. How he had wearied for her, and how she had come not. It may be an error on the part of a man to endea-

vour to persuade a girl to become his wife without a preliminary sound of trumpet and peal of bells; but unquestionably he expiates his error when he waits for her and she does not come.

Poor Barry's conduct had not always, as has been seen, been above suspicion and reproach. He had been weak in his wrath at a woman's faithlessness—weak to the point of taking vows that he kept in anguish of heart. But though he had allowed resentment to rule him to the extent of folly, he had never suffered it to urge him on to sin. He would have been a kind husband to the woman who enriched him, and adored him, and harassed him, had she allowed him to be so. He would have thrown everything to the winds for the love of Laura Bray, who drew back when he was over the brink; and he would have fulfilled any ideal bond to Kathleen had she desired the sacrifice. And in all these things fate had baulked him.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MISS THYNNE'S SUCCESS.

MISS THYNNE was conscious of it! and not being a bad-hearted woman, she was sorry for it. But for all her consciousness, and all her sorrow, she was powerless to prevent its being the case. She was losing her interest in the search.

Who can blame her? She had covered herself and the library with ancient dust from long undisturbed books in the most gallant manner imaginable, and she had found nothing but the rigid love-letter of a loose woman, which proved that woman's unworthiness alone, not her punishment.

"I'm sick of it!—I mean I've no chance of finding it!" she said to herself one day, walking to the window, from which she could watch the earl making his way across the park in company with a big stick and a terrier that could abolish any number of rats in a minute, provided he were promptly choked off the carcase of each in succession, otherwise he was not game enough to drop the dead and go in for the living.

"I've no chance of finding it," she repeated, meditatively, "and my incessant devotion to my pursuit appears to bore the earl. His tastes are uncommonly superficial, by-the-bye; for, antiquarian as he would be thought, he hasn't the

patience to dig for hours for a buried fact, and I don't want to bore him."

Lord Kilcorran's figure was diminishing in the distance. It was not an imposing figure by itself, but occupying the position it did in that landscape—the position of the owner of the broad and well-cultivated lands around—it had a certain dignity.

Miss Thynne watched it as it paused and poked with its stick at the roots and trunks of one or two fine old trees. "It must be solitary, not having some one with him who can sympathize about his timber," she thought. "I may as well go out and give him the opportunity of vaunting their grandeur. Trim's performances are beyond me altogether, but I'm capable of indulging him to a discursive canter amongst the trees."

Trim was the terrier who managed rats so cleverly, and he was a type of dog that was particularly distasteful to Miss Thynne. She had no eye for the beauties of the little yellow dog with half an inch of insolent tail and quarter of a yard of keenly-perceptive nose. But she abstained from making her sentiments respecting him public, for Trim was dear to the heart of the Earl of Kilcorran.

She went up and made elaborate preparations for an accidental encounter with Lord Kilcorran when he should be returning from his morning walk. Miss Thynne, in her earliest bloom, had never been a votary of that creed which declares nature's dress to be loveliness; and now her earliest bloom was over, and nature she felt was less to be relied upon than ever. There was, therefore, always a good deal to do before she felt herself to be ready for the eyes of man in the glaring light of day in the open air. In the house she always contrived that the shadow of a curtain or deep shade of some sort or other should fall athwart and come between her face and unkind observation. But out of doors she trusted more to the art of those mighty magicians who make one "beautiful for ever" than to chance.

Now, the field had been perfectly clear when the resolve to join the earl had seized her, for Mrs. Lloyd and her daughters had seen their mighty relative depart unmolested by the "odious old maid," as they called Miss Thynne. Seeing him so depart they had ceased from the vigilant watch they had been keeping lately, and had relapsed into the undisturbed pursuit of the several occupations dear to their

respective hearts. Mrs. Lloyd, for instance, was happily employed in packing what she called a "little hamper" to send to her husband. Her eldest daughter was assisting her, and making many filial suggestions as to the filling up of the crevices; and the three youngest girls were up in a loft playing at being grown-up ladies in some old Court dresses they had routed out from a corner.

But these occupations had palled upon the Misses Lloyd before Miss Thynne had put on the final touches and completely armed herself for the aforesaid accidental encounter. When she came down she found three waifs and strays in the persons of the three younger nieces hanging about in the hall, with the distressingly weary and purposeless air children are apt to assume when they are very desirous of doing something and are trying to look as if they were not thus desirous. In this case they wanted to go out with Miss Thynne and gallop about the park like colts; but they refrained from giving utterance to their sentiments and wishes, because they stood in awe of the rather lordly-looking lady with the high nose and the literary tastes.

Now, Miss Thynne, though possessed of a high nose and a complexion that she had to hold up aloft as it were, in order to keep the blood from mounting to it too determinately—Miss Thynne, despite these things, had a heart that softened to little children. She never petted them mutely or called them absurd names in fondness, real or affected. But she was kind to them in her own arid fashion, and could not bear to see them look disappointed when some trifling concession on her part could call forth an opposite expression. So now, when she came down prepared to stalk the earl, she found the earl's three younger nieces with their limbs wandering over the bottom stairs and the hall chairs and tables in a desultory manner, and she stopped to ask them what they were doing and what they wanted.

"We want to go out with you," one of them answered with an assumption of modest assurance that was intended to convey intense anxiety to go with her, and at the same time a general knowledge of their unworthiness for the honour.

"You can go out with me if you like," she said, "but I am only going for a walk in the park; wouldn't you rather go and look at the dogs?—I would if I were you."

But they declined this proposition, and

pronounced for accompanying her with a decision there was no combating. It might have been flattering to her at any other time, but she had a serious object at stake now, and did not care for desultory flattery.

The Miss Lloyds, though juvenile, were preternaturally sharp. They had graduated in a bad school for the retention of child-like innocence and guileless unsuspicion. It was a trait in these young ladies, that they suspected everybody of either bringing a bill and wanting it paid, or making love. They had been habituated to watching their papa and the butchers and servants, at their mamma's behest, and they indulged in a supervision of that lady for their own delectation. They were accomplished little spies in fact, and Miss Thynne's chances of edging in a sympathetic remark about the timber or anything else, unsuspectedly, were microscopic now this bright little trio had attached itself to her.

It is an awful ordeal to take children of an animated turn of mind and a taste for inquiry out for a walk, when you have anything to think about. The innocent prattle of infancy is a delicious thing when you are very idle and very happy; at other times it is apt to become a nuisance. And so Miss Thynne felt it to be on this occasion.

They were confiding children up to a certain point, and they fatigued her with a running fire of comparisons between their present and past mode of existence; but they were wary children also, and invariably stopped short on the brink of anything that promised to be in the least degree interesting. Her affection for the earl was not of a sufficiently disinterested nature to make these small female relatives of his, objects of interest to her. Indeed, they harassed her so unmercifully, that the only thought she had with regard to them in the future was, that if she ever ruled at Drumleyne, the whole Lloyd family should be gently but decidedly ousted.

Had she endeavoured to conceal her weariness of the small demons who had spoilt her walk from Lord Kilcorran, when they met him, that amiable man would have deemed her a hypocrite, and suspected her at once of attempting to play upon his avuncular feelings. As it was, she made no concealment of the fact that she was tired and rather cross, and this frank revelation threw him more off his guard than he had been before.

All that the little Miss Lloyds had to tell their mamma when they went in was, that Miss Thynne had said she must go home in a few days, and their uncle had replied, Was she sure she had collected sufficient matter? It was the salient point of the conversation, and Mrs. Lloyd had to confess that it was the most innocuous a possible aspirant to the hand of the mighty earl could have held with him.

But small as the grain was, it bore colossal fruits. That time which Miss Thynne had devoted to her adornment before coming out had not been wasted, despite the drawback of the children's presence. Lord Kilcorran could not help feeling, as she stepped along by his side, that she would make a distinguished mistress of Drumleyne and mother to his heir. Her points were all good, and she had proved herself fully capable of putting some little pamphlets he had in manuscript in order for publication. They were interesting little works these, that influenced his decision with regard to Miss Thynne—a light treatise on Pre-adamite Celtic pottery, and a history of the coins that were current in the time of Brian Boru, and other instructive works of the same class. But, like Frankenstein's creator, he found himself incapable of managing these productions, and he thought that Miss Thynne would do it for him nicely, he had seen her look at them without giving a sign of weariness.

Poor Kathleen's unredressed wrongs were swept away entirely from Miss Thynne's mind when the earl gave her the option of remaining for life at the place to which she had come in Kathleen's cause. In the triumph of her soul at this brilliant termination to a long career of doubt, Miss Thynne forgot everyone and everything that did not bear immediately upon the subject of her great success. She was, as I have before stated, far from being a bad-hearted woman, but in the thoughts of the splendid nuptials that were to be hers, she submerged all pity for the one who, but two years before, had been in a like position.

Lady Gertrude Thynne was telegraphed for, and came at once on the annunciation of her daughter's prospects, for Mrs. Lloyd was not pleasant to the bride-elect. Chagrin at the demolition of the château d'Espagne she had erected overpowered her caution, and Mrs. Lloyd

failed to trim her sails to the wind that was blowing Miss Thynne along to such a glorious harbour. Therefore solitary confinement with Mrs. Lloyd was unpleasant, and Lady Gertrude was sent for, and she came, and was gracious and merciful generally, even to the extent of endeavouring to alleviate that chagrin which her daughter had been unable to brook.

"We must try to manage matters so that you will be more comfortable when you leave Drumleyne," Lady Gertrude said, patronizingly, to the sister of her future son-in-law. And Mrs. Lloyd shrugged her shoulders, and remarked that it was all very well to talk, but that matters required an immense amount of management to enable people to be comfortable on nothing a year.

The reason why the haughty mother of the future countess consented to diplommatize with and soothe the matron sister who felt herself ill-used by the new arrangement was, that Lord Kilcorran had hinted that there would still be room at Drumleyne for the Lloyds. The thought of such an arrangement was repugnant to Lady Gertrude, who had views as to her own permanent instalment there. So she preferred diplommatizing to driving Mrs. Lloyd to bay.

Lord Kilcorran had a natural and national spirit of toleration towards any number of hangers-on. Provided they did not interfere with his personal comfort in any way, he could smile and be happy under the consciousness of Drumleyne being full to overflowing with poor relations; but he could not calmly endure the prospect of being called upon to give away fixed sums of ready money.

"If my sister goes from here now," he said, when Lady Gertrude was debating the question of Mrs. Lloyd's future with him,—"if she goes from here now, she'll naturally look for some kind of compensation for being turned out by my marriage. I don't see why she can't stay? I don't see why Harriet and herself can't get on by-and-by as well as they have done all along!"

"As Harty's mother, I should strongly object to such an arrangement," Lady Gertrude said, decisively; "and Harty, little as she says, would feel very much hurt if you subject her to the annoyance."

"That's exactly what Augusta says about going; 'she feels very much hurt,' she says, at 'my having raised their hopes if I only meant to dash them to the

ground again.' One would imagine I had promised to marry them all, to hear her talk."

"I don't see that you are bound to continue doing anything for them, simply because you have been most generous to them already," Lady Gertrude suggested. And then the adage that says "Blood is thicker than water" was verified, and the Earl of Kilcorran, who was conscious that his generosity had not been vast, replied that "Whether Lady Gertrude saw it or not, he considered himself bound to continue his munificence to his sister and her children."

Blood is thicker than water! but the latter is the purest fluid, and flows from a higher source than the former usually. The Earl of Kilcorran was not at all disposed to forget the tie of blood which existed between them, when the mistakes of his sister, and the errors of her husband, and the iniquity of them both in having brought so many daughters into the world, were on the tapis; but at other times he would gladly have waived the connexion altogether.

However, the days were long past when Mrs. Lloyd could afford to be sensitive and lofty-minded. She pleaded her own cause eloquently and with no embarrassing circumlocution.

"You broke up our home, Jack, when you told me you wanted me to come here," she said, when he diluted the Thynne views and poured them forth for her benefit. "Mr. Lloyd has faults—no one knows it better than I do—but at the same time I must say that he has never forfeited his claims on my wifely obedience and respect. However, at your bidding I disregarded those claims. I came here very much against his will, and now you're going to reward me by sending me away with scorn and contumely."

"With nothing of the sort, Gussie; do be reasonable," he pleaded. He was Earl of Kilcorran, Baron Blaney, but he did feel very abject as his sister reproached, and his future mother-in-law alternately hectored over and wheedled him. And yet, abject as he felt under the existent aspect of affairs, he could not reconcile it to his soul to promise to disburse a certain sum annually to be rid of Mrs. Lloyd and her claims.

He soon saw that it would be an arrangement incompatible with his own comfort to retain two contending powers in his house. So he made an effort, and

resolved upon giving his sister permission to live in a house that stood on the extreme edge of the Drumleyne estate, a house that would not let because it was too large for the land appertaining.

"What will you give me to furnish it, Jack?" Mrs. Lloyd asked, when she had given a tearful assent to the projected plan. "You will hardly, I presume, think Ballymore suitably appointed, when I and the children and nothing else go there."

Again his desire to avoid disgorging ready money came in the way of his natural good-nature.

"Oh!" he said, "you may take things enough from Drumleyne to answer your purpose, I should imagine, Gussie! You may take what you like from the rooms my predecessor occupied. You see I shall be having very heavy expenses presently; therefore I shall be better pleased if you can make this furniture do, than if you draw on me for your first quarter in advance."

So Mrs. Lloyd, finding that whatever her brother gave then would be deducted from the not too liberal allowance he had promised to make her, gutted the late earl's suite of rooms, and made Ballymore as comfortable as she could. And Lord Kilcorran, for the sake of avoiding the immediate disbursement of three or four hundred pounds, permitted carved oak furniture of twice that value to be removed from his mansion of Drumleyne.

Barry O'Byrne came to his own place about this time, and acted on Miss Thynne's permission to call upon her.

"You will understand how impossible it has been lately for me to give my mind up wholly to the object which brought me here," she said, as she was walking up and down the front of the house with her guest.

Miss Thynne had taken him away from her mother's presence, as that lady interfered with the free interchange of ideas between them. And then Barry, looking unconscious of the cause of the impossibility, Miss Thynne gave him to understand the reason as distinctly as was compatible with delicacy.

"This is the room I devoted myself to investigating principally," she continued, pausing before the window of the late earl's study.

"There doesn't seem much in the room to examine," Barry replied.

"Oh! it was full of old carved oak furniture, but Mrs. Lloyd has taken all

she could to Ballymore; but I found out all the secret drawers in the writing-table, and searched them well before it went."

Miss Thynne turned away from the window, and looked down at the brightly-polished toes of her admirably-fitting Balmorals—the subject of the injuries of the late earl's widow was becoming tedious to the bride-elect of the present Lord Kilcorran.

"There is only one way of getting at the springs of all the secret drawers in those complicated old carved mysteries," Barry said, after a minute's pause, "and that is to smash them. I've heard that in some of the things Gibbons did, you had to pull the nose of a saint to slide away a panel, and to nip a cherub's ear to open a drawer, very often."

"Well, I shall be very happy to drive you over to Ballymore," Miss Thynne replied, "and then if Mrs. Lloyd is amenable, you can manipulate the carvings to your heart's content. It certainly never did occur to me to pull the noses of the saintly faces that peer at you from all sorts of unexpected places; but if you think any good will accrue from such a proceeding, I'll go and help you to do it now with all my heart."

They drove over to Ballymore, the handsome, haughty lady who was beginning to think this search for what was more than life to another woman an excellent joke, and the man who, for more reasons than one, ardently desired that this matter should be set at rest. And at Ballymore they found Mr. Lloyd ensconced amongst the handsomest pieces of furniture (for he had very good taste), in what he called his "own den."

He was wont to hold his own den sacred from intrusion, but Barry gained the freedom of it by offering to its owner a month's shooting at Greystoke.

"Come into my den," he said to Barry, "and I'll show you the portrait of a pointer that I bred myself—best dog I ever had."

"You'll find plenty of sport at Greystoke," Barry told him, "and a couple of very good dogs. You may have the slut if you like." And then he walked up to the writing-table that stood in the late Earl of Kilcorran's room, and fell to admiring the groups of flowers that might have been transformed into wood in the moment of their fullest bloom, and the quaintly humorous heads that leered at you from amongst them.

"It has always been a weakness of mine—oak carvings," Barry explained presently to his host, and the latter said, and so it had always been of his, especially what had been in the family (he omitted to say, his wife's family) for generations.

"I took a table of this kind to pieces once myself," Barry said, "and gilded the carvings, and had them made into brackets. I can't tell you how much better the effect was than on such a lumbering piece of furniture as this."

"I've a great mind to try it now, do you know?" Mr. Lloyd replied. He was eager as a boy always to try the effect of new arrangements and experiments. "I've a great mind to try it—gilding's rather a bore though, is'nt it?"

"Oh no," Barry said (God forgive me for telling lies about it, he thought);

"I'll show you how to do it, if you like; it's easy enough, and the effect is uncommonly good. I'll bring over my fellow to-morrow; he'll understand what we want, and knock it to pieces more cleverly than a carpenter."

So Tim Sullivan was taken to Ballymore the following day, and set to work on the task of destruction.

"Don't injure a bit of the work, for God's sake!" the master of the house said aloud, and—

"Go softly over the stones, Tim," Barry whispered; "you know what we're looking for."

And Tim obeyed both mandates, and removed portion after portion of the elaborate carving as tenderly as he would have wiped a tear from the cheek of an infant.

A U T U M N.

THE brown leaves in showers are falling,
All nature seems doomed to decay,
And a voice from the tomb is heard calling
The bright joys of Summer away.

The woodlands all cheerless are growing,
With the nooks we once loved so well;
While the streamlet is silently flowing,
And sad as a funeral knell.

The easterly winds have bereft us
Of our flow'rets so varied and gay,
And the swift-winged swallows have left us
For the lands of the South, far away.

The robin re-visits us daily,
The song-thrush all mournfully sings,
And no more doth the butterfly gaily
Sail on its gossamer wings.

But though the young blossoms are dying,
And Winter comes round in his turn,
We should not be languidly sighing
For things that can never return.

Tho' the sun 'neath the hills may be sinking,
And Night her dark mantle may fling
O'er the earth, let us only be thinking
Of joys that the morrow will bring.

And thus let us act as we wander
Through life's ever varying scene,
For 'tis useless to mournfully ponder
O'er troublesome things that have *been*.

As to Winter, let's welcome him hither,
While we trust that the future will bring
Flowers as fair as the host that now wither,
And birds that as sweetly will sing!

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BRITISH COLLEGE OF HEALTH.

THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT CURE HAS JUST BEEN RECEIVED:—

EAST COWES, ISLE OF WIGHT, HANTS.

16th March, 1864.

GENTLEMEN.—Having experienced a perfect Cure from taking Mr. MORISON's Pills, I think it right to make it public, for the good of others that may be afflicted with the like disease, which was SCORBUTIC ERYsipelas, from which I suffered more or less for 27 years.

It first made its appearance in my left leg; this being healed by an outward application, it did not again make its appearance for some years; when it did, it was from the shoulders downwards by the side of the back bone; this was healed also by an outward application: and some years after it broke out in the face, and any exposure to cold generally brought it on. I was at this time advised by a friend to try Mr. MORISON's Pills, and had the 'Morisoniana' put in my hands. I read the work through, and felt confident that my case was a disease of the blood, and that to derive any benefit from the pills I must take them six or nine months. I began with three every 24 hours for some time, and then five for some months, and for 13 weeks took 10 every 24 hours, 5 of No. 1 in the evening and 5 of No. 2 in the morning, before breakfast; at the end of this time (13 weeks) I took 10 of No. 1 in the evening and 11 of No. 2 in the morning for eight days. I then began to reduce them, making the whole time about a year, until the disease disappeared from the system, and although exposed to cold and night air, I have felt no return of the symptoms since, although several years have elapsed from the time of leaving them off. Should you deem this my testimony of worth to the public, you can make use of my name.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WM. HARVEY, *Master Mariner.*

East Cowes, Isle of Wight, Hants.

To the Gentlemen of the BRITISH COLLEGE OF HEALTH,
Euston Road, London.

P.S.—After I had taken the pills six months my face was one mass of humour, but at nine months it disappeared altogether; and during the time I took 21 every 24 hours, I had two humoral substances come from the system; the first was the largest, but such relief was given after they came from the body, I felt quite renewed altogether.

W. H.

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HEAL & SON have observed for some time that it would be advantageous to their customers to see a much larger selection of Bedroom Furniture than is usually displayed, and that to judge properly of the style and effect of the different descriptions of furniture it is necessary that each description should be placed in a separate room. They have therefore erected large and additional Show-Rooms, by which they will be enabled not only to extend their Show of Iron and Brass Bedsteads, and Bedroom Furniture, beyond what they believe has ever been attempted, but also to provide several small rooms for the purpose of keeping complete suites of Bedroom Furniture in the different styles.

Japanned Deal goods may be seen in complete suites of five or six different colours, some of them light and chaste, and others of a plainer description. Suites of Stained Deal Gothic Furniture, Polished Deal, Oak, and Walnut, are also set apart in separate rooms, so that customers are able to see the effect as it would appear in their own room. A suite of very superior Gothic Oak Furniture will generally be kept in stock, and from time to time new and select Furniture in various woods will be added.

Bed Furnitures are fitted to the Bedsteads in large numbers, so that a complete assortment may be seen, and the effect of any particular pattern ascertained as it would appear on the Bedstead.

A very large stock of Bedding (Heal & Son's original trade) is placed on the Bedsteads.

The stock of Mahogany goods for the better Bedrooms, and Japanned goods for plain and Servants' use, is very greatly increased. The entire stock is arranged in eight rooms, six galleries (each 120 feet long), and two large ground-floors, and forms as complete an assortment of Bedroom Furniture as they think can possibly be desired.

Every attention is paid to the Manufacture of the Cabinet work, and large Workshops have been erected on the premises for this purpose, that the manufacture may be under their own immediate care.

Their Bedding trade receives constant and personal attention, every article being made on the premises.

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